

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

Introductory
Price:
\$1.00

WINTER 1969-70

Special Section

*Are the Media
Ready for the
Seventies?*

America's Two Cultures
THEODORE H. WHITE

Multiplying Media Voices
EDWIN DIAMOND

What the FCC Must Do
NICHOLAS JOHNSON

Must the Media Be "Used"?
JAMES MCCARTNEY

Washington's White Press Corps
JULES WITCOVER

Beyond Agnewism
ALFRED BALK

... to assess the performance of journalism in all its forms, to call attention to its shortcomings and strengths, and to help define—or redefine—standards of honest, responsible service . . .

... to help stimulate continuing improvement in the profession and to speak out for what is right, fair, and decent.

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

Winter, 1969-70

Columbia Journalism Review is published quarterly under auspices of the faculty, alumni, and friends of the Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University.

Acting dean and editorial chairman:
Richard T. Baker.

Visiting Editor: Alfred Balk.

Editor (on leave): James Boylan.

Art director: Burton Wenk. Production assistant: Lois Ireland. Circulation manager: Sylvia Orr. Subscription assistant: Vered Hershfield. Circulation consultant: S. O. Shapiro.

Board of advisory editors: Edward W. Barrett (chairman), Norman A. Cherniss, W. Phillips Davison, Fred W. Friendly, Luther P. Jackson, Penn T. Kimball, John Luter, Melvin Mencher, John M. Patterson, Lawrence Pinkham, Louis M. Starr, Leonard Wallace Robinson, Frederick T.C. Yi.

Chairman, publishing committee:
Louis G. Cowan.

Volume VIII, Number 4, Winter, 1969-70. Published four times a year by Graduate School of Journalism, New York, N. Y. Editorial and business offices: 700 Journalism Building, Columbia University, New York, N. Y. 10027. © 1970 Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University. Printed by Vermont Printing Co., Brattleboro, Vt. 05301.

Subscription rates: \$6.00 a year. Single copy: \$1.75. Add 50¢ a year for subscriptions going outside the United States and United States possessions.

Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and Boston, Mass.

Articles

- 7 Are the media ready for the Seventies? Introduction.
- 8 America's two cultures. An interview.
Theodore H. White
- 14 Beyond Agnewism.
Alfred Balk
- 22 Multiplying media voices.
Edwin Diamond
- 28 What the FCC must do.
Nicholas Johnson
- 34 Newspaper "preservation"—or monopoly.
Stephen R. Barnett
- 36 Must the media be "used"?
James McCartney
- 42 Washington's white press corps.
Jules Witcover
- 49 Latin America: the making of an "uncontinent."
Georgie Anne Geyer

Departments

- 2 Passing comment: views of the editors
- 54 Departures
- 55 Notes on the art: Seymour M. Hersh; Jack E. White
- 61 Books
- 62 Unfinished business
- 64 Report on reports
the lower case (inside back cover)

Passing comment

The ten least reported stories

A favorite pastime of the season is selecting the "ten top news stories" of the year—and on this occasion the decade—just closed. Inevitably, because of the terms of the question, spot-news events are chosen. Are they any longer an accurate measure of journalism's year? We suspect they are not. As discussed elsewhere in this issue, journalism's responsibilities now extend far beyond spot-news reporting—to, among other subjects, reporting on human institutions. Accordingly, we think it appropriate that at each year-end journalists contemplate, along with presumably well covered spot-news stories, the least reported stories of the year. For 1969—indeed, for the Sixties—we nominate these broad "institutional" stories as the ten least covered by American journalism:

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Congress | Local government |
| Department of Defense | Medical care |
| The police | Education |
| The courts | Industry |
| State legislatures | The media |

Comment on these selections is welcome, as are nominations in coming months for the ten least covered stories of 1970.

The study report *Mass Media and Violence*, released at press time by the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, may prove to be a timely catalyst in solving some of the problems discussed in this special issue. If so, the report will have overcome an ironic launching—the breaking of the official release date by the Chicago *Daily News*. Advance distribution

had been planned to allow time for press analysis and excerpting, but when the *News* broke a twenty-two paragraph story—on page 8—on January 12, the Commission issued a blanket release of the formidable 614-page paperback, and the scramble was on.

This chaotic christening was regrettable, for here is a government-sponsored, citizen-executed study of a scope somewhat comparable to that of the Hutchins Commission more than two decades ago. Detailed comment on and criticism of the report must await future issues. But a summary reading reveals a treasure cache of thought-stimulating history, quotations, and data. Many recommendations have appeared before, in this journal among others, and some conclusions parallel points made in this issue—which except for this column was prepared prior to the report's release. Some points, such as the necessity to report more on conditions that breed violence, are irrefutable.

The major new element, which deserves extensive discussion, is proposal of a national media study center. Not necessarily a press council, like Britain's, and in intent apparently not a Big Brother agency; rather, as the study states, one "independent of both media and government, and responsible to the people"; perhaps Congressionally chartered along the lines of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, "with a financing mechanism independent of the political processes; and with clearly delineated powers of monitorship, evaluation, and publication, but without sanction."

It is not clear how the study group proposes to keep the center's governing board nonpolitical if, as suggested, members are Presidentially appointed. Nor is it apparent how independence can be assured if financing is substantially dependent on government. The precise responsibilities of the center also remain unclear, though a research component is delineated, under a board of "distinguished academic specialists in such diverse but relevant disciplines as communications research, social psychology, sociology, cultural anthropology, communications technology, law, psychiatry, economics, and management." Tasks would include:

Analysis of media employment practices . . .
evaluation of effectiveness of government agencies
charged with media-related responsibilities. . . .

This is a turbulent era. All institutions are undergoing reexamination. Journalism cannot be an exception. Nor can we—or should we—expect that reexamination of journalism be only by journalists. Behavioral science, the bar, civic organizations, individual citizens have wisdom to contribute. Not only must we listen; we must initiate dialogue.

Too often critics of the press—particularly those outside the press—soar beyond practicality, realism, and a decent respect for the economic, political, and intellectual complexities of the journalist's habitat. Much as we at *CJR* try to avoid such sins, on occasion we are accused of them and, being mortal, on occasion we are guilty. When we are, it is not for lack of humility about or sympathy for the journalist's task, or for the good intentions of professional journalists. Nor is it out of intent to be less than constructive. When our editors and writers err—in omission or commission—our columns remain open for rebuttal and elaboration. Candid dialogue with our readers, who must be our critics, is both welcome and imperative.

If we have won acceptance, it is because our intentions as well as at least some standards we try to uphold have been accepted. We believe that *Mass Media and Violence* has been offered in the same spirit, with admirable goals, and we urge thorough and sympathetic consideration of it. Copies, at \$2.50 each, are available from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402.

The Mylai incident

When the history of the killing of Vietnamese civilians in the village of Mylai is complete, how will the news media be graded for their role? Reading the account of how reporter Seymour Hersh became first to break the story nationally [see NOTES ON THE ART] makes one ponder. Certainly Hersh deserves an award for his enterprise;

the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* merits recognition for its November 20 publication of "massacre" photos by ex-combat photographer Ronald Haeberle; CBS-TV performed an important service (acknowledged by Hersh) in telecasting a November 24 interview that helped "sear the conscience" of still apathetic Americans; and other media showed diligence in pursuing various aspects of the story.

After the dimensions of the event had become apparent from initial stories, there were regrettable excesses in pursuing possibly prejudicial supplementary material, it is true. Some editors, to their credit, already have expressed second thoughts about this. But the media were so instrumental in bringing the case to public attention, and so many protective legal devices are available to the accused—including verdict of a mistrial—that the excesses in this instance are not of overriding concern. As one editor said, "The incident touches so deeply the national conscience that it is more important to bring it out in the open and discuss its effects on our national morality than it is to convict a trigger-happy soldier."

A more disturbing issue, as a number of editors have candidly noted, is: Why wasn't the story revealed before? The Mylai killings occurred in March, 1968. Within two months, according to the English edition of *Le Monde* [November 26, 1969], French-language Vietcong publications in Paris were describing the killings. Rumors were so prevalent in Vietnam that GI Ronald Ridenhour, who wasn't even in the unit in question, was able to piece together a summary he sent last winter to thirty officials in Washington, including the President, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and leading Congressional committee chairmen. Last Spring, when nothing had happened, Ridenhour engaged a Connecticut literary agent who approached several "national publications" to no avail. The Columbus, Ga., *Enquirer* and AP last September carried stories that a Lt. William L. Calley, Jr., at Fort Benning was being charged with murder of "an unspecified number of civilians" in Vietnam. Several reporters were known to be probing by then, but Hersh's series and a related CBS-TV interview provided the big break.

The question now is will reporting end with

the verdict in the forthcoming courts-martial, or will there also be the type of institutional reporting alluded to above? As the *Washington Post* observed:

There are more terrible questions that have to do with a system and a state of mind that can allow nearly twenty months to elapse before so monstrous an event is even brought to light, let alone to trial. We need to know how, in a system which positively thrives on operations reports and progress reports, no honest report of this "incident," as the Army calls it, apparently ever reached the high command. And how, according to reports in this newspaper, the regimental commander could develop strong suspicions that something had gone wrong and then make only the most cursory investigation. The suspicion arises that the Army didn't want to know, that somehow an atmosphere has developed in which the unthinkable atrocity is of no great matter. . . .

In addition, the media, in their own self-examination, should ask what is being done to foster more independent investigations such as Hersh's. Foundations, too, should ask this question. Some \$2,000 quickly available from the Philip Stern Fund for Investigative Journalism was crucial to Hersh's ability to finance necessary travel. How many other sources are there to which reporters can go for research funds? Why aren't there more?

Police and the Black Panthers

Again on the subject of institutional reporting, what underlies the spate of police killings of members of the militant Black Panther party, many in raids on local Panther headquarters, often in the middle of the night? The December 4 shootout which killed two Panthers and wounded four in Chicago occurred at 4:40 a.m. To the media's credit, answers to the question now are being pursued.

Indeed, in Chicago, after the *Tribune* ran State's Attorney's photos with captions erroneously identifying nail heads as bullet holes, competing media investigated and exposed the error in front-page stories and on prime-time newscasts, along with

pointing up other questions about official actions. The *Chicago Journalism Review* devoted its entire December issue to the case. As columnist Flora Lewis wrote:

The existence even of the question of whether the police are persecuting and killing people because they belong to a group which may be hostile, even detestable—but is not illegal—is of the utmost gravity.

Reporters as undercover men

Once more, despite a 1968 order by then Attorney General Ramsey Clark, comes word of newsmen doubling as FBI informers—this time in the trial of the "Chicago Eight." Carl Gilman, cameraman-reporter for KFMB-TV in San Diego, and Louis Salzberg, former staff photographer for *El Tiempo* and now proprietor of an FBI-affiliated photo service in New York, both testified to having accepted pay from the FBI for undercover work while ostensibly on duty as newsmen. If legitimate newsmen are to maintain continued free access to individual news sources, organizations, and events even under sensitive conditions, then surely such compromising of their integrity must be stopped—by a law imposing a penalty on the masqueraders, if there is no other way. If the media do not press for an end to such deceptions now, all ultimately shall reap the whirlwind.

The Tate case

Time headlined a report THE DEMON OF DEATH VALLEY. *Life* began an article, "Long-haired, bearded little Charlie Manson so disturbed the American millions last week . . . that the victims of his blithe and gory crimes. . . ." The *Los Angeles Times*, among other newspapers, front-paged a lengthy "confessional" by Susan Atkins in which she—one of the accused in Los Angeles

—portrays Charles Manson as instigator of and the chief participant in the mass slayings in the home of Sharon Tate last August. No trial, of course, had yet been held.

"All this," commented *Newsweek*, "presumably did Miss Atkins no harm, but it hardly made things easier for her co-defendants." Nor for media spokesmen who have insisted that court bans on pre-trial reporting are unnecessary to prevent prejudicial publicity. In this instance, no public interest was served by revelations about Manson. If court-imposed impingements on pre-trial reporting are to be avoided, the media themselves must take steps to see that repetition of this shameful episode does not occur.

Freedom to advertise

Question: When can a newspaper properly reject an advertisement?

Answer: When it might offend a large department-store advertiser?

As patently as such response might do violence to journalistic canons—or even to expediency at a time when interlocking media ownerships deny restricting access to the media—the above apparently is the considered position of the *Detroit Free Press* and four Chicago daily newspapers. As reported by *Advertising Age*, the *Free Press* rejected an eight-page insert from a Chicago soft-goods marketer after its advertising representative had accepted an order for the insert. The rejection was attributed by the *Free Press*' representative to a policy which "forbids any copy which might compete with their retailers."

In Chicago the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America sought to buy full-page ads explaining why the union was picketing Marshall Field & Company for selling imported men's and boys' wear—but all four dailies refused the ad. The Field papers (*Sun-Times* and *Daily News*) were quoted as saying they accept no ads which attack an organization or individual by name (though they recently published an American

Tobacco Company ad attacking the New York *Times*); the joint ownership of the *Tribune* and *Chicago Today* gave no explanation. Since then the union, charging there is "no satisfactory substitute for one who is denied newspaper space for the expression of ideas," has asked the U. S. District Court to compel acceptance of the ads. All of which elicited from *Advertising Age* this classic understatement:

In both cases, there is a strong implication that the decision not to run the ads was influenced by the fact that a major department store advertiser in each of the cities involved might not like them. . . . On occasion we have ourselves refused to publish advertising which we have believed to be untruthful or in bad taste or otherwise undesirable. But we think it is of the utmost importance that all media employ this right with extreme care. . . . Like most rights, it imposes on the user a duty, and all media should be mindful of this duty when exercising their rights.

Interning, Boston style

The following report was submitted by Gene Graham, associate professor of journalism at the University of Illinois. Mr. Graham, a former Nieman Fellow and co-winner of a 1962 Pulitzer Prize, spent four summers as training director of the *Boston Globe*.

In the summer of 1967 editors of the *Boston Globe* undertook a significant experiment in internship training: deploying interns for saturation interviewing in connection with major public affairs series. Because there had been a riot that Spring and a city election involving Louise Day Hicks was due that Fall, the plan was to send reporter-photographer teams from one neighborhood to another, inquiring into concerns of every educational, economic, and racial component of the city. Directed by managing editor Ian Menzies and urban affairs reporter Alan Lupo, the teams interviewed throughout most of the summer, eventually being augmented by every *Globe* staff specialist—from medical, financial, and science writers to transportation, education, and governmental beat reporters. The result: a thirteen-part City Profile series, written by senior *Globe* staff mem-

bers in collaboration with the interns. In the course of it the interns (and their supervisors) discovered what dependable interviewers they are, and the interns learned viscerally how greatly the little things concern city dwellers—the Chinese torture of a drip-drip-drip from faulty plumbing in substandard housing; the stench and clutter of uncollected garbage; the frustrations of crowding and absence of personal privacy.

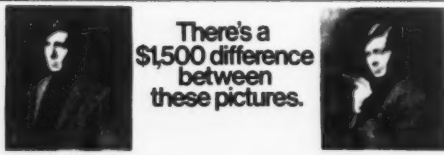
The following summer, interns worked on two series, one a study of suburban high school attitudes, the other a survey of community parks, playgrounds, and other recreational facilities. Interns visited every “green spot” on the city map and reported their findings—broken glass, broken pavement, locked play yards, unfilled swimming pools, netless tennis and basketball courts, and, of course, admirable conditions where they existed. This past summer three projects occupied the interns: a survey of New England resorts (including a black resort on Martha’s Vineyard), a second survey of suburban high school attitudes, a four-part series on area Vietnam War wounded.

For the growing number of metropolitan papers with summer interns, projects such as these provide a valuable alternative to taking guided bus tours and “rotating the beats” with little design. Here trainees can work purposefully under experienced guidance. Moreover, in this way the newspaper can regain contact with the city’s pulse—with its residents’ joys and frustrations and fears. The circulation department knows how imperative it is to have its newsboys hit the porches. Reporters and editors must learn to “hit the porches,” too.

Darts and laurels

Laurel: To the *Wall Street Journal*, 1) for assigning reporter Raul Ramirez to masquerade as a migrant worker and report his experiences, and 2) for an October 1 report of testing of 1970 autos and the flaws discovered—again demonstrating that “Wall Street” need not be synonymous with business puffery.

Dart: To the Cigar Institute of America and its public relations consultants for their twenty-third year of ignominious attempts to bribe news photographers into taking photos of people smoking cigars. [See below]



**There's a
\$1,500 difference
between
these pictures.**

It's the 23rd Cigar Institute of America Press Photo Contest and the first prize is \$1,500. Second prize \$750. Third prize \$500. Fourth prize \$250. Fifth prize \$125. Ten Honorable Mention Awards of \$50 each.

3. Applicant may submit as many published news photos as desired if they appeared between November 1, 1969 and November 1, 1970.

4. No entries will be returned unless specifically requested.

5. No entry will be reproduced or published without permission, and all rights remain with the photographer.

6. The award winners will be notified by December 1, 1970 and, unless there is objection by the winners, will be simultaneously released to leading trade publications.

7. All entries should be mailed to: Press Photographers Photo Awards Editor, Cigar Institute of America, 1270 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10020.

Concerned in the belief that, under the proper circumstances, the inclusion of a cigar can often add greater impact to a news photo.

Laurel: To the *Minneapolis Tribune* for defying community conventions on September 15 by printing verbatim the crudities and obscenities of a truck driver appointed to the Human Relations Commission, thereby portraying his racism, pugnacity, and know-nothingism as no “doctored” quotations could have done.

Dart: To the *Boston Record American*, not only for failing to credit a *Boston Globe* reporter's role in bringing about the arrest of larceny suspect George Lewis Brady in Atlantic City on November 13, but also for masking the fact that *any* reporter was involved. Such pettiness about competitors' involvement in major news stories, while declining, still is far from extinct.

Laurel: To *Science* magazine, which first revealed [June 27, July 18] continued blacklisting of certain scientists from Department of Health, Education, and Welfare advisory panels—a procedure subsequently publicized so thoroughly by other media it has been ordered discontinued.

Laurel: To *Chicago Daily News* Washington reporter William J. Eaton for exposing Judge Clement F. Haynsworth, Jr.'s profit of \$437,000 on investments in a firm whose case he had judged—the exposé coming after the *News* had endorsed the judge's reputation as “impeccable” and his qualifications as “the highest.”

Are the Media Ready For the Seventies?

"Seldom in the annals of man has there been a time when the unusual has become so commonplace," an editorial in *Saturday Review* stated recently. "Change is ubiquitous in the environment. . . . Looked at from the broad perspective of time, the world may be in the midst of one of those historical periods when a groundswell of change occurs in attitudes that has major significance for the entire human condition."

How can the news media cope with the consequences of this change? The first requisite, obviously, is an accurate statement of problems—both society's and the media's. For, as French novelist George Bernanos has observed, "The worst, the most corrupting of lies are problems poorly stated."

The Vice President of the United States, in two recent speeches, set forth our elected national Administration's conception of American journalistic problems. The *Columbia Journalism Review*, however, believes the subject deserves more than a partisan frame of reference. As a new decade of onrushing change dawns, therefore, we present the following special section.

America's two cultures

THEODORE H. WHITE

Are the national media "out of touch" with the rest of the nation? A Pulitzer Prize-winning political reporter is interviewed about a widening cultural schism.

Vice President Agnew has suggested that there is an inordinate degree of media concentration in New York City, and that therefore TV, at least, has a distorted perception of America. Do you accept this "two Americas" dichotomy?

I think what we're going through now in this country is not only a political crisis but a cultural crisis of enormous dimensions. It's a difference in cultures that divides the country and it will probably take fifty years before we can look back and see what was happening.

The frontier of the change lies in New York City. New York is moving into areas of thought and expression and emotion as strange to the country as a whole as, say, Berlin in the 1920s was to Bavaria. Berlin was the place where modern art happened, where the great experimental writing happened, where theater exploded, where the most creative and imaginative political thinking in Europe took place. Berlin in the 1920s, not Paris, was the center of the world avant-garde. But the Berlin which the world saw was completely different from the broad sweep of Germany, which eventually spat out Berlin and the Berlin culture and, to our shock, eventually chose Hitler. I don't think that the situation in the U.S.A. is anywhere nearly as dramatic as that,

but the gap between the avant-garde in New York and the old Emersonian culture of the land beyond the Alleghanies has never been so great.

Is this a schism between New York and the rest of the country or between urban America, of which New York is the largest conglomerate, and the smaller towns and rural areas?

The cutting edge of the change runs through a number of urban centers, especially those deeply influenced by academia. That is, Boston, New York, Washington, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, all influenced by the great university complexes there. With this growing split in culture has come another development, which is the near-total concentration of the control of the national media in Manhattan. Basically that's a function of technology, a function of electronics, a function of the high-speed printing press and distribution mechanisms. It's a circumstance. But this concentration of thinking in the New York-Washington-Boston area puts it in the hands of villagers who, I think, have never been more remote from the broad basin beyond the Alleghanies.

This is no conspiracy. This is a circumstance. People in New York have a social life. They like to be heroes at dinner parties as well as heroes

alone. To go against the dominant thinking of your friends, of most of the people you see every day, is perhaps the most difficult act of heroism you can have.

That applies to small towns also?

Of course. There was the Babbity of the 1920s and there's the Babbity of Greenwich Village, which is just as much a conformist group of people as is Sauk Center, Minn. Greenwich Village is probably more conformist than Sauk Center.

To what extent are networks news executives and reporters remote from the nation in view of such points as *Time's* noting that ten of twelve top people in TV news are from outside the East [November 21], presumably with family and other ties elsewhere? And that network bureaus and correspondents continually feed material into New York?

First, you start with the fact that, of course, Walter Cronkite comes from Missouri, and Howard Smith from Louisiana, and Eric Sevareid from North Dakota, and so on. If you think that Manhattan is run by New Yorkers you're mad. There are only two Rockefellers among the ten top executives of the five biggest banks in New York. The rest of the executives come from places like villages in Tennessee or Florida or Clearwater, Minn. New York is a place which assembles various kinds of talent. It assembles talent in a particular kind of cultural context. You have Chet Huntley, going back soon to Montana. During his sojourn in New York he has been a part of this culture and community, just as I am. Perhaps we are more sensitive. Perhaps because we came here looking for novelty, we are confusing the future with the present.

I travel more than most people, so I am really worried about this breach in American culture. I went down to the Peace March on November 15 in Washington. So did my eighteen-year-old son. He thought it was a glorious experience; he was doing his bit for peace. It did not seem incongruous to him that certain groups were marching under Vietcong banners, and that Vietcong banners flanked the speakers' stand, while Americans were

fighting against and being killed by Vietcong. Nor did it seem to bother the senators who spoke, or anybody else there.

This is something which does not shock or disturb here in New York. It does shock and disturb all through the Big Valley. Now why this is so, how it has come about, you would have to explore a lot more, you would probably have to explore the history of American communications, how Americans learn about their world.

For a long time American history has been taught in components and categories—American cultural history, American political history, American economic history—but no department of history teaches what I now think is most necessary: the history of American communications. All politicians operate in an environment of ideas. But, technically, this environment changes from decade to decade. Whoever shapes the ideas, whoever creates the applause or the denunciation, or whoever seizes the moral heights in the world of ideas controls the politics not of today but of ten years hence. The common phrase in New York is that the *New York Times* can't carry an election. The *New York Times* editorial page can't swing even 100,000 votes in any given contemporary New York City election. But it affects the thinking of all executive, intellectual, and communications leadership. And ten years hence this thinking *does* shape elections; it creates the sounding board against which our politicians offer programs and leadership.

Is the fact that many of us in the media—including many in control of the media—come from other than New York and Washington significant in any way? That some, like Chet Huntley, may be sort of unreconstructed squatters who think of "out there" as home, have some sensitivity to what is there, and are not as affected by the New York milieu as, say, the literati who are not journalists and find it easier to turn inward and talk only to each other?

I think we are a self-selected group. We came here, or we were chosen to come here, because somehow we were ahead of the common thinking or at least were thought to be ahead of the com-

mon thinking. My point is, right now are we too far ahead? One of the paradoxes of the situation is that I have never known a group of men more fundamentally, humanly, decent or intelligent or responsible than the people who run these networks. These are absolutely authentic men. I have lived and grown up with most of these people. Charles Collingwood, Seavareid, Smith, Cronkite, Brinkley, Huntley, Edward P. Morgan are absolutely men of conscience and some of them are also men of learning. These are good people.

I don't think we would be as acutely aware of the New York concentration if we still lived in the age of radio. Radio is a voice; you have to catch the idea alone. But television is a totally different medium, which is why I would love to write a history of the media in the U.S. TV is a medium where you are carrying a twelve-ton pen and you have a hundred people helping you carry the pen. It's a collective, not an individual, effort. Nobody, for example, can look at all the film that comes in. It has to be strained through staff. What the top men see is the end selection.

I did the movie version of *The Making of the President 1968*. We had two crews on the road all the time. They were young and wonderful cameramen. I was busy writing my book and reporting and I couldn't direct the film crews, so about nine months later when I finally got to Hollywood to put the film together, I found that these young people absolutely adored Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy, and there was not a bad shot of either Gene McCarthy or Bobby Kennedy in the thousands and thousands of feet that we took. The images were glowing. On the other hand, these people who worked with me did not bring back one human shot of Hubert Humphrey. Everything that was taken looked sinister. He has an angular face, a pointed chin, and if you want to shoot Hubert badly, it's the easiest thing in the world. I have a personal fondness for Hubert Humphrey. I have known him for fifteen years. But I had to work with film that showed Hubert Humphrey only as a sinister character. Such problems are even more pointed when you come to the daily TV shows. You're in the hands of the hundreds of people who are feeding material to you. No single person controls television.

What was your reaction to Vice President Agnew's interpretation of this situation?

I reacted, as many people did to Agnew that night, with a sense of rage and indignation. After about two weeks my indignation cooled off. Several paragraphs in that speech came from my 1964 book, where I described the passion of Barry Goldwater—his war against the Eastern Establishment and the press he had to face. But what Agnew did, I think, was to describe a circumstance that we all recognize, and imply that it is a conspiracy. This is not a conspiracy against America or against the Midwest or against the Republican

*"I am really worried
about this breach
in American culture..."*

Party. It is a circumstance of reality. You might just as well say that a conspiracy put the automobile industry in Detroit, or "schlock" prime-time entertainment shows in Hollywood. Things grow up and they build. National news coverage developed out of New York.

If Agnew had made that speech directly to the National Association of Broadcasters, if he had not started that speech with a defense of Nixon against the commentators and the Republican Party against New York, it would have been a major speech by a public figure. He took a half truth and converted it into something else. And you have to separate the various parts of the speech. To some of those things we certainly must address ourselves. Is it good or healthy to have so much power over the American mind concentrated in a very few hands in New York City? The other part you have to separate out is, do you want the Government to get into what goes over the air? And I don't want the U.S. Government to get into any control, any censorship, any pressure on the airwaves of the U.S.A. And there you have to say, "Mr. Agnew, if you're implying that the U.S. Government has got the right to

censor or control what goes over the airwaves, we aren't with you and you're our enemy." And if Mr. Agnew was saying as he should have said before an association of broadcasters, "Gentlemen, there's a condition here that no one knows how to cure, you have to cure it yourselves," then I'd say he had a pretty sound proposition.

But he said something different—that the American people should rise up and let their voices be heard to make these people pliable.

That gets us right back to the culture conflict in the U.S. He's saying to the Midwest it's you against them. It's you, the ordinary people of America. There has always been this suspicion of the big city on the part of rural America. And not only in rural America. It's there in Bergen County, N. J., there in Nassau, in every suburb.

So what should be done?

I still don't know what the people, all the people out there, can do. We may be caught in a technological dead end. Electronic reportage is different, in essence, from press reportage. Any decent-size newspaper can and should have correspondents overseas telling its community what goes on overseas. Every decent-size newspaper should have a man down in Cape Kennedy reporting on Space for his local community. But to cover technologically in pictures a thing like the Arab-Israeli war, the Vietnam War, a great assassination, a national convention requires millions and millions of dollars. You can't have a hundred TV stations in the country each giving its own point of view nationally and each reporting a national election. The coverage is so expensive it has already got beyond the budget of ABC; ABC has practically given up covering major events in depth. So there are only two great corporations in the country which consistently can afford the money to do the kind of superb coverage which we get when TV is at its best—and when TV is at its best, there's nothing in the world greater.

But it takes extravagant amounts of money to do a good job on TV. Instantaneous transmission of color images costs you about \$10,000 for ten

minutes on Telstar from Paris. So technologically we're being forced to recognize that the kind of pictorial coverage that this country requires can be afforded by only two or at most three networks. Those networks exist here in New York. How do you handle that situation?

If I were running CBS and NBC, I would stick with my present staff as the best I could possibly assemble. On the other hand, I as a citizen think there should be several more networks with other points of view. I once said on William Buckley's program, in a moment of fantasy, that if I could pass a miracle I would have three national networks, thoroughly funded, and have one on the West Coast, one in Chicago, and one in New York—all of them existing in different regional ambiances of opinion. I don't see how that will come about. I have no solutions at this point. I

"The national media must air the unfinished business of our time..."

do say that there is a media crisis. And Vice President Agnew approached the problem with an axe.

Local stations make money. They have evening news shows. But instead of commenting on national or international affairs, they put that responsibility on the networks. Yet Mr. Agnew directed none of his remarks to the station owners, who really have tremendous freedom and could at least build regional personalities, in the same way the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Chicago Daily News* and others built their staffs in competition with the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

That's a good point.

Mr. Agnew seemed to be going beyond questioning philosophical differences to suggest that TV has been politicized. Do you agree?

The night before John Kennedy was elected he

spoke in the Boston Arena and he concluded that the chief duty of the President of the United States is to put before the public the "unfinished business" of our time. The national media also believe that their chief duty is to put before the public the unfinished business of our time, and therefore no government will satisfy them. Neither Eugene McCarthy nor Richard Nixon nor Lyndon Johnson nor Hubert Humphrey nor Nelson Rockefeller. Because the unfinished business of our time is enormous. There is pollution, there is racial discrimination, there is violence, there is traffic, there are all sorts of problems. No matter what any administration does, national media say why not more, why not quicker? This is where Agnew was wrong. He thinks they're just against Richard Nixon.

The national media are the national critics. Not in any partisan sense. I have known Eric Sevareid since he parachuted out of a plane in Burma during the war. I guess my closest friend at the moment is Charles Collingwood. And I don't know whether Charles, Eric, Walter Cronkite—or the ten major reporters and commentators—are Democrats or Republicans. I would bet they are ticket-splitters. The national media have somehow put themselves into the role of the permanent critical opposition to any government which does not instantly clean up the unfinished business of our time. This is a strange kind of politicization.

Among newspapers, the history is that the local press is quite conservative. Has this been your observation?

This is less and less so. They are being sensitized by the influence of the national media.

There are three national newspapers in the country: the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Wall Street Journal*. Beyond that are massive and important regional publications. The *Boston Globe* has changed the politics of Massachusetts. The *Chicago Sun-Times* will be the force that destroys Dick Daley. The *Los Angeles Times* is making California better. The *Portland Oregonian*, *Louisville Courier-Journal*, *Charlotte Observer*, *Atlanta Journal*—these are all regional pa-

pers which have great and progressive influence.

What challenge, if any, do these regional media have in common with New York-based media?

I'm a working journalist. I think the great professional problem that challenges all of us is institutional reporting. Americans are not being oppressed by evil men. We are being oppressed by institutions that don't seem to work. We are all furious at the New York Telephone Company because it is falling apart. I don't know why it's falling apart, but I feel irritated, aggravated, and annoyed. People are aggravated by the railroads, by the hospital system, by the institutions of government itself. The students are aggravated by the institutions of the universities. Now, to describe

"It may be that all of us must think of a counterbalancing reporting..."

and explain an institution which is going wrong is the most difficult kind of reporting to make exciting. Second only to the Vietnam War, what is bothering the U.S.A. is inflation; rising prices. Inflation is a moral disaster. But you can't describe inflation and make it interesting. If you could find one sinister backroom cabal of men who were raising prices it would be a dream story. To get into inflation you have to get into what is wrong with our institutions. They don't respond to our present needs.

In effect, you are saying there is an institutional sickness in America. That's what the young and the Eastern press are saying: that there is an institutional failure in our cities, in the quality of life. But in Dallas, Tex., or Grand Island, Neb., they don't see life in that perspective.

And there you get to the cultural cleavage again—for most Americans, life has gotten a lot better, in every way, than twenty years ago.

Schools are better. The food is better. Architecture is better. Vacations are longer. Circumstances of daily life are more and more comfortable, except for what the draft does to their boys and inflation does to their wages. On the other hand, in New York we stress not the present progress but the problems of the near and distant future. What is happening is that this New York analysis of our environment stems from areas where the institutional crisis is most acute, yet it's heard by the people who live in the old environments and are not nearly so disturbed; that is the culture gap.

The whole structure of American party politics is breaking down, and what is breaking it is education. Education is the incubating force of change in our time. My feeling is that we are desperately in trouble in the United States. I doubt whether, since the founding of this republic, America has questioned itself and its purpose

so deeply as it is doing today. Television oriented toward protest feeds our self-doubt. It may be that all of us in responsible positions in journalism have got to think of a counterbalancing reporting.

What is news today? Is it what we are achieving or that which remains to be done? You ask yourself every day, "How did we get trapped in Vietnam?" It was a blunder—an enormous blunder. But you can't toss out all of American civilization—200 years of it—because of one blunder in the past four or five years.

Since I object to all concentrations of power, I worry about the concentration of power in which I exist and in which I work. I have lived under systems where the government runs the news. I prefer profit-makers running the news. I admit the failings of it. But I don't want anybody or any government to intrude on the gathering and dissemination of the news.



MRS. MARY SIRHAN TALKS WITH NEWSMEN AT U.N. Sirhan's mother said she was turned down in attempt to address the General Assembly session.

Sirhan Mother Sees U.N. Aide

The mother of Sirhan, the assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King, was seen by a U.N. aide at the General Assembly session in New York. The mother of Sirhan, who was seen by a U.N. aide at the General Assembly session in New York, was seen by a U.N. aide at the General Assembly session in New York.

The mother of Sirhan, who was seen by a U.N. aide at the General Assembly session in New York, was seen by a U.N. aide at the General Assembly session in New York.

The mother of Sirhan, who was seen by a U.N. aide at the General Assembly session in New York, was seen by a U.N. aide at the General Assembly session in New York.

Plus ça change . . .

Past and future meet in juxtaposition of story and advertisement in Denver Post (October 14).

COLORADO'S LEADING
DAVE COOK
SPORTS STORES

7 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS OPEN NIGHTS 'TIL 9
• 1661 Larimer • 16th and Walnut • Bear Valley
• Wheatland • University Hills • North Valley
• Colorado Springs, 184 N. Tejon
Call 875-1329

HUNTER'S CARNIVAL

FANTASTIC BARGAINS
IN OUR DEPARTMENT-
WIDE SALE!

Stop . . . Shop . . . Save!

SAVE AS MUCH MORE ON THIS
**SPRINGFIELD 840
DELUXE HI-POWER
RIFLE**
30/30 Winchester

With built-in cock on opening stroke, trigger pull, thumb safety built near and built detachable clip magazine, 3-shot capacity, walnut finish with full pistol grip and folded comb.

LIMITED QUANTITY **49⁹⁹**

Buy Your Big Game License At Dave Cook's

SPECIAL PURCHASE!

Redfield 2 1/4-POWER SCOPES

Wider field of view and greater magnification than most difficult to turn to aim alone. It's the scope made for both shooting and for heavy wooded areas. A 1000 diameter, 1 1/2" diameter, 1000 mm. 1000 mm.

YOUR OWN FOR LESS THAN ORIGINAL PRICE

\$50.00 VALUE
29⁹⁹

NAME THE SCOPES YOU WANT . . . 16"
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE . . . 14"
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE . . . 24"
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE . . . 78"

World Famous NATO Cooper CUSTOM SPORTER RIFLE
THE BEST OF A LIMITED!

Master action with positive long safety, long turned Detachable receiver parts, hand checking, reserved pistol grip cap, contoured built handle, gold lined front sight on tapered ramp, deluxe recoil pad, sling swivel. New 1947 model.

JUST ARRIVED
New Cooper
CUSTOM SPORTER
in two sizes with
124⁹⁹

30/30 . . . **109⁹⁵**
WITH BUILT-IN AND
SHOTS BUILT-IN

SALE!

Hunting Ammunition
All the
79⁹⁹

SHOTS
STOPS
ONLY

Beyond Agnewism

ALFRED BALK

Politicization has been blamed for media credibility problems, but the issue goes deeper—to structural and conceptual deficiencies.

■ All inhabitants of the White House at some point become exasperated with the press. As James E. Pollard noted in *The Presidents and the Press*, George Washington (in the words of Thomas Jefferson) on one occasion became "much inflamed, got into one of those passions when he cannot command himself, ran on much about the personal abuse which had been bestowed on him . . ."; Andrew Jackson faced such press antagonism that he wooed newspapermen by placing some on government postmastership rosters; Franklin D. Roosevelt operated in so hostile a press environment that columnist Raymond Clapper commented, "No future politician looking for an alibi is going to have a ghost of a case trying to convince the country that he must curb free speech to get things done"; and John F. Kennedy confessed, "I am reading it more and enjoying it less."

Thus, when Vice President Spiro Agnew delivered his twin polemics against the media last November, it was not the fact that they conveyed White House displeasure with the press that was historic. They were significant, first, as the only time a U.S. official of so high a rank had devoted two consecutive prepared speeches to castigating the news media. Secondly, coupled with other actions, they seemed to constitute prominent ele-

ments in a developing political strategy, the ultimate objective of which was not clear at this writing. Further, as discussed by James McCartney elsewhere in this issue, the actions occurred against a backdrop of calculated "packaging" and insulation of Mr. Nixon from close questioning by reporters during his Presidential campaign.

For these reasons alone, Vice President Agnew's two anti-media speeches merit more than cursory analysis. But there are other reasons as well. One, certainly, is the noteworthy number of factual errors—along with errors of omission—they contain [see page 20]. Also, there is the exceedingly emotional level on which they appealed to some listeners. Both speeches were selective in the specific media organizations mentioned; both were sharply anti-Eastern; both were replete with what conservative columnist Ted Lewis of the *New York Daily News* characterizes as "red hot phrases." Consequently, several news media were deluged with the heaviest shower of hate communications since the McCarthy era.

Norman Isaacs, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, told of correspondents' "vicious" and "venomous" remarks about the "Jew-owned and Jew-dominated news media"; Robert Donovan of the *Los Angeles Times* noted that "yahoos are telephoning obscenities to television stations"; and *New York Post* columnist Pete Hamill revealed that "since Spiro Agnew opened

Alfred Balk is Visiting Editor of the Review.

his mouth, the mail has been . . . the real vicious stuff: they are going to kill my children; I am a 'Jew bastard' . . . Agnew is going to put me in a detention pen or under a rock; Hitler didn't gas enough of us. . . ."

Nonetheless, there was, to quote one editorialist, "a germ of truth" in the Vice President's remarks, and it is the sorting out of truth from partisan polemics that concerns us here. It is true, for example, that the conventional spot-news formula means that "bad news drives out good news"; that "in the networks' endless pursuit of controversy, we should ask: What is the end value—to enlighten or to profit?"; and, most emphatically, that "our knowledge of the impact of network news on the national mind is far from complete." It is also true that "many, many strong, independent [media] voices have been stilled in this country in recent years" and that "the American people should be made aware of the trend toward monopolization of the great public information vehicles." It is further true that Americans should ask themselves, "Are we demanding enough of our television news presentations"—and other news media as well?

But is it true, as Spiro Agnew seemed to be saying, that American news media have been politicized—that they have fallen under effective control of liberal zealots, to the detriment of fair reporting and analysis of other than liberal viewpoints? If this were true, certainly it would represent a genuine watershed in American journalistic history, for the news media as a class, by all available indices, always have tended toward the conservative. One indication of this is newspaper endorsements of Presidential candidates. When *Editor & Publisher* began tabulating daily newspaper endorsements in 1932, 52 per cent of newspapers responding were for Herbert Hoover, 40 per cent for Roosevelt, and 7 per cent uncommitted. Since then, Republican candidates consistently have won the majority of endorsements except in 1964, when 42.4 per cent of newspapers reporting to *Editor & Publisher* endorsed Lyndon Johnson, compared to 34.7 per cent for Barry Goldwater (the remainder were uncommitted). In fact, except for that election, no more than 17 per cent of U.S. dailies ever have supported a Democratic Presidential candidate since the Roosevelt era. In 1968, Rich-

ard Nixon won 60.8 per cent of reported endorsements; Hubert Humphrey, 14 per cent; George Wallace, 1.2 per cent; and 24 per cent were uncommitted.

Other indicators substantiate this basic conservatism. In the study "How Newspapers Use Columnists" [*CJR*, Fall, 1964], for example, Ben Bagdikian found that of all syndicated columns used in dailies, only 37 per cent of the columns run were liberal—and only 1 per cent were "very liberal," contrasted to 29 per cent which were "very conservative." Of the papers using columns, more than half had an imbalance favoring conservatives, and among these "conservative-favoring" papers 85 per cent of the columns used were conservative. Concludes Bagdikian:

On heated issues that are serious and contemporaneous—Medicare, fair employment practices, relations with China, for example—there is no healthy printed dialogue because only half of the mechanism exists in most places. . . . It is hard to reconcile the findings with the claim by Republican conservatives that the press has been hostile to conservative ideas. . . . The situation has resulted in curious behavior: the Democrats seem to be pleased if some columnists are on their side; Republicans, indignant if not all of them are.

One is reminded of A. J. Liebling's comparison of the London press—where the "fan of opinion" includes "Communists, Socialist, Liberal, and all shades of Conservative"—to New York City's, with a range "from conservative to reactionary." Most of all, one thinks of a comment by Robert U. Brown of *Editor & Publisher*—never accused of flaming liberalism—in a December 13 editorial:

Is it possible that the onetime one-party press, the target of the late Adlai Stevenson because of its support of conservative candidates and issues, could all of a sudden become the liberal press, the target of those same conservatives it was once accused of favoring? Or are we in danger of dealing in slogans and generalities, just as the critics were in Stevenson's day?

Because broadcasters are subject to the Fairness Doctrine when opinions are offered, and none of the Big Three networks and few local stations endorse political candidates, similar indices of broadcasters' political leanings are unavailable. Still,

given the many instances in which a publisher and local broadcaster are the same man, there seems no reason to assume any large disparity in the political profiles of management in the two media. And even if one accepts Frank Shakespeare's generalization that most editorial employees are more liberal than he and his politically compatible colleagues, it must be remembered that it is the owner who hires and fires, sets editorial policy, and encourages or discourages major reportorial undertakings.

Edward R. Murrow confirmed this when, despite his formidable professional stature, he was unable to gain a greater share of prime time and plentiful CBS-TV revenue for public affairs projects, and soon thereafter left. Floyd Knox, city editor of the *Waterbury Republican*, also confirmed this last October when, against his publisher's wishes, on Vietnam Moratorium Day he ran a front-page list of Vietnam casualties from the Waterbury area—and, for this and previous transgressions, was fired. Also, at the Passaic-Clifton, N. J., *Herald News*, when managing editor Ted Hall defied his publisher's orders to cease investigating the prosecution of two murder cases—one of them involving charges against the son of a nearby suburb's newspaper publisher—Hall, too, was fired.

If media management as a class, with exceptions, remains basically conservative politically, however, it also is true, as noted by Theodore H. White in this issue, that publishers, at least, are becoming increasingly independent in partisan terms. This was illustrated by the unprecedented 1964 shift of editorial support away from Barry Goldwater, despite his capture of the GOP Presidential nomination. This independence also is reflected in such "split-ticket" endorsement records as that of the Riverside, Calif., *Press and Daily Enterprise*. In 1964, while declining to endorse either Johnson or Goldwater for President, it made its first Democratic endorsement for Senator in history, for Pierre Salinger. In 1966, it made its first Democratic endorsement for Governor, for Edmund "Pat" Brown. Then in 1968, while endorsing Richard Nixon for President, it approved Democrats for both the U.S. Senate and Congress.

Like all political definitions, furthermore, the

terms "conservative" and "liberal" are relative. By what criteria, for instance, could George Wallace, Spiro Agnew, Nelson Rockefeller, Eugene McCarthy, and Tom Hayden agree on classifying someone as "conservative" or "liberal"? Is the John Birch Society "conservative," or "radical Right"? Is Nelson Rockefeller "conservative" or "liberal"? What are the Americans for Democratic Action—"radical"? If so, what are the Students for a Democratic Society—"revolutionary"? If so, then

*"The media always
have tended toward
the conservative..."*

what are the Black Panthers—who, unlike the SDS, like to collect guns? And how do they differ from the Minutemen or some White Citizens Council units, which supposedly are at the other "end" of the political spectrum (which, of course, actually is more circular than linear)? The definitions or classifications operatively are really what the majority of Americans believe that they are.

How conservative are most Americans? Lloyd A. Free and Hadley Cantril did extensive attitude polling on this question and reported their findings in *The Political Beliefs of Americans* (Rutgers Press, 1968). They conclude in part:

In brief, about two-thirds of the public qualified as "liberal" with respect to the operational level of Government programs, and the category of "completely liberal" outnumbered the "predominantly liberal" by more than two to one. . . .

[On the other hand] the liberal consensus of Americans at the *operational* level . . . fades away when the views of the same representative sample of people are tapped at the *ideological* level. . . . In view of actual practices at the operational level, Americans at the ideological level continue to pay lip service to an amazing degree of stereotypes and shibboleths inherited from the past.

What the educated man believes is likely to fall within this "liberal" (philosophically, not

partisan) consensus. What the educated, informed journalist adopts as his frame of reference is also. If he is "professional"—a word Mr. Agnew unfortunately ignored, but one essential to any serious dialogue on journalism—the *majority* of the audience therefore will accept him as apolitical as a *reporter*, and will prefer as *commentators* and *editorialists* voices credible to those within the consensus (but not necessarily credible to fringe groups).

Thus logic dictates that the loudest, most persistent complaints about media bias are likely to come, not from the two-thirds of the electorate which constitute Free's and Cantril's national consensus, but rather from the fringes of that consensus. Hence, as former Kerner Commission aide David Ginsburg told a Pittsburgh conference on the media and minorities: "The problem is made harder by the fact that accusations of bias against the media are often based on the bias of the audience itself. What you and I might agree is neutral and objective, Strom Thurmond and a Black Panther might both believe is biased and lacking in credibility—for very different reasons."

In some instances, obviously, protests from the far Right or far Left are justified, as are those from politically disparate Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and Indians; farmers, tenement dwellers, small businessmen, labor unionists, college students—any subgroup which, in a given situation, may not share society's dominant concerns and values. If enough such groups feel this dissatisfaction over the media, the social consequences can be unhappy indeed. For, as Zechariah Chafee emphasizes in *Government and Mass Communications*:

The press then fails to satisfy the need for social health through adequate communications in order to relieve the stresses and strains and class antagonisms. A widespread belief in the unfairness of the media arises. . . .

This appears to be the situation extant in the United States now. Technology, urbanization, education, and other engines of rapid social change have at least temporarily fragmented American society. With this fragmentation and the disorientation inherent in rapid change have come height-

ened pressures on the news media. As columnist David Broder writes:

That tiny undercurrent of anti-press emotion which General Eisenhower tapped when he invited the 1964 Republican convention delegates to express their scorn of "sensation-seeking columnists and commentators" has quickly become a flood. George Wallace found that newspaper editorial writers ranked right up there with those "pointy-headed guideline-writers who can't even park their bikes straight" as sure-fire targets. . . .

The press is caught up in what John Gardner has called the crisis of our times—the necessity for institutional adaptation to the forces of change. . . . It is my impression that the adaptive response from the press has been perhaps more sluggish than that of any other major institution.

As a result, the news media face grave credibility problems. Both George Gallup and Louis Harris have attested to this from the same platform. In September, 1968, Gallup told a Public Relations and Media Symposium at the Waldorf Astoria in New York:

"Never in my time has journalism of all types—book publishing, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, movies—been held in such low es-

"Engines of social change have fragmented American society..."

teem. . . . We have raised up a new kind of person in the United States during the last three decades. He's much better educated, more enlightened, and he's no longer satisfied with the obsolete practices, the tired formulas that we've handed down in the field of journalism, all designed for a different kind of person, brought up in an entirely different age."

A year later, at the next forum, Harris reported having quantified some of these sentiments in a poll for *Time*: "A high 72 per cent of the most educated people are the most distrustful of news

out of Washington. . . . Scarcely more than a third of the public agree with the proposition that the way Washington is covered is a free press operating at its best. A majority of the college-educated simply refused to believe it. . . . The college-educated and the young professional people and newsmagazine readers feel most strongly that . . . the TV camera can lie. . . ." Readers, he added, are concerned about "coloration," suspecting that publishers and some newsmen slant news toward "special" rather than the "public" interest.

Similarly, last August the *APME News*, summarizing a study by the Associated Press Managing Editors Association, reported that a "credibility gap exists for the press without question." It quoted the report:

The respondents cited such shortcomings as editorial prejudice, half-told stories, inaccurate headlines, and insufficient attention to serious community matters.

Nearly 90 per cent of the public officials and leaders felt that professional journalists should set up ethics committees to investigate press misconduct. . . . Seventy-seven per cent of the public officials and leaders favored the establishment of local press councils. . . .

Officials and editors alike pointed to major causes of our credibility gap: failure to print corrections properly; inaccuracies in elementary facts; evidence of editorial prejudice by placement of stories, size of headlines, etc.; faulty headlines; half-told or misleading stories; influence of organized pressure groups and public relations specialists.

Is it, then, political bias and "blurring" of the reporting and comment functions which are at the root of media credibility problems, or something more? Perhaps underdevelopment of diverse media channels; declining access to forums in the media; obsolescent journalistic formats; inadequate understanding of how to report change; overemphasis on trivia, escapism, and commercialism at the expense of richer veins of our culture?

Indeed, does our present media structure serve the public interest? What are the trends?

John McLaughlin, S.J., in *America*, writes:

Twenty-five per cent of all television stations are controlled by newspapers. Every commercial VHF television license in the top ten U.S. markets is controlled either by a network, a group

owner or a metropolitan newspaper chain. In the top twenty-five television markets there are ninety-seven stations. Fifteen of these ninety-seven are network owned. Over *one-half* of all television revenue (\$1.13 billion) regularly goes to these fifteen stations and their network owners.

FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson declares:

The average return on depreciated tangible capital investment [in broadcasting] runs about 100 per cent a year. Over 340 stations last year grossed in excess of \$1 million per station. There is an active market for stations—capital gains providing an even more lucrative source of private profit . . . than the exorbitant revenues.

Atlantic, in July, 1969, devoted a section to the "American Media Baronies" in which it discussed, among other points, a trend toward conglomerat-

*"Competition of ideas
could be revived if we
make it our cause . . ."*

ism that has made CBS, for example, "owner of TV stations in five major cities, a record company, musical-instrument manufacturing companies, a book-publishing house, educational film producers, CATV systems, Creative Playthings toys, and the New York Yankees." *Broadcasting*, on December 22, reported on the FCC's having sent "pilot questionnaires" to parent firms of six major broadcast licensees. Travelers Insurance, one of the six, owns stations only in Hartford, Conn., but others own a dozen or more. They are:

Avco Corp. . . . It manufactures airplane and industrial engines and parts, aircraft-frame components, missile and space products, defense and industrial electronics, weapons and ammunition, steel products, heating equipment, mechanized farm equipment, and financial services.

Fuqua Industries, Inc. . . . It is in photo processing and trucking, manufactures agricultural

equipment, power lawnmowers, metal buildings, mobile homes and land-clearing equipment, sells pleasure boats, and owns motion picture theaters and real estate.

Chris-Craft Industries, Inc. . . . Its manufacturing interests include auto interior textile trim, cotton and jute pads, automotive carpet, foam-rubber products, boats, and marine motors and chemicals.

Cox Enterprises, Inc. . . . publishes newspapers [and] has a number of other interests—in common-carrier microwave facilities, television-program production and distribution; motion-picture production; trade journals, technical publishing, and wholesale auto auctions.

E. W. Scripps Co. . . . publishes newspapers [and] also owns 95 per cent of United Press International, which in turn owns United Features Syndicate, and has CATV interests. . . .

Raymond B. Nixon, in *Editor & Publisher* on June 1, 1968, reported that "the growth rate in the number of group-owned dailies over the last seven years has been the most rapid in U.S. history" and that 828 of some 1,700 dailies now are group-owned, representing 58 per cent of daily and 63 per cent of Sunday circulation. The Thomson Newspapers organization, he added, encompasses three dozen U.S. dailies, while Gannett, Scripps League, Newhouse, and Donrey Media all own from twenty-two to twenty-nine dailies; and nine groups own fifteen to twenty: Scripps-Howard, Ridder, Copley, Harte-Hanks, Lee, Freedom (Hoiles), Worrell, Perry, and Southern (Walls).

Forbes, on October 1, noted that *Editor & Publisher* samplings showed the average medium-city newspaper (circulation 53,800) "netted close to 14 per cent on revenues" while papers with a circu-

lation of 250,000 or more made 22.4 per cent on revenues (before taxes)—compared to 5.8 per cent for all manufacturing industries (among which, for example, the drug industry earned only 9.5 per cent). The magazine added:

Monopoly is the key to profitability in the newspaper industry generally. . . . Problems? Every industry has problems. It can stand a few of them when it's as profitable as the newspaper industry.

Bigness, of course, is to some extent inevitable and is not necessarily evil if counterbalanced; and profitability is essential to survival of private business. But as Yale University president Kingman Brewster, Jr., said in a speech on December 6:

The concentration of economic power, opinion power, and political power creates a sort of closed loop. Politicians must raise money from corporations in order to pay the networks the enormous cost of television time. Corporate advertisers call the network tune. And the networks must curry favor with the successful politicians to assure their franchise. The open society seems to be closing—not by conspiracy, but by this mutual dependence. . . .

The opinion industry itself could be loosened up by a variety of ownership interest. . . . Why should a town be locked into a jointly owned newspaper and television station? We should also consider requiring advertisers or commercial networks to contribute a small percentage of their outlays or revenues to the financing of nonprofit community and educational television. . . . The ancient faith in the free competition of ideas and interests and viewpoints could be revived. But it will happen if, and only if, we make it our cause.

It is, it would seem, to these issues that laymen, media executives, and public officials must address themselves if the underlying causes of press and broadcasting credibility problems are to be solved.

Grambling--America's black grid factory

Grambling No Grid Factory

Which paper do you read?

Headlines on same UPI story in Chicago *Sun-Times* (left), New York *Sunday News*, November 9.

THE AGNEW ANALYSIS: FALSE PREMISES, WRONG CONCLUSIONS

[On November 3, President Nixon's words and policies were subjected to instant analysis and querulous criticism.

MIKE WALLACE: The fact of the matter was that the speech was in the hands of the analysts . . . two hours ahead of time, and they all went over to be briefed on his speech by Henry Kissinger. Then they . . . listened to the speech and made their comments. So it was hardly any more instant analysis than the kind . . . that is done by overnight newspapers.

HERBERT KLEIN: I'd have to agree with that.
—*Sixty Minutes*, CBS-TV, November 25.

When President Kennedy rallied the nation in the Cuban missile crisis, his address to the people was not chewed over by a roundtable of critics. . . .

Would the Vice President believe Sander Vanocur, Ray Scherer, Frank McGee, David Schoenbrun, Roger Mudd, George Herman, Richard C. Hottelet, and Douglas Edwards? The date on that is October 22, 1962.

—Fred W. Friendly, speech, November 21.

We do know that to a man these commentators and producers live and work in the geographical and intellectual confines of Washington, D.C., or New York City. . . . We can deduce that these men read the same newspapers. They draw their political and social views from the same sources.

It is true that we live in New York . . . but not a single one of the network newsmen . . . comes from New York or even from that Eastern Establishment area: David Brinkley [is] from North Carolina; [Chet] Huntley from Montana; Howard K. Smith from New Orleans; Dan Rather from Houston, Tex.; Eric Sevareid from South Dakota; Harry Reasoner from Iowa . . . Frank McGee from Oklahoma. This is a cross-section of America in its own way.

—Walter Cronkite, *Sixty Minutes*.

Is it not fair and relevant to question its [TV news'] concentration in the hands of a tiny, enclosed fraternity of privileged men elected by no one . . . ?

No, I was not elected. But I submit that I could not have arrived at my present post without two score of news executives having made individual and independent judgments about me along the way. And I might add that none of these men ever asked me about my personal opinions. . . . Had I ever violated their trust, I would not have been in their employ the following day.

—Elmer Lower, president, ABC News, speech, December 10.

Do they allow their biases to influence the selection and presentation of the news?

Well, we all have our prejudices, we all have our biases, we have a structural problem in writing a news story or presenting it on television as to time and length, position in the paper, position on the news broadcasts, and these things are all going to be affected by our own beliefs, of course they are. But we are professional journalists. This is the difference. We are trying . . . to be objective.

—Walter Cronkite, *Sixty Minutes*.

As with other American institutions, perhaps it is time that the networks were made more responsive to the views of the nation and more responsible to the people they serve.

What does that mean, "made"? He could have said, "Perhaps it is time the networks became more responsive." . . . It seems to be an implicit threat to station owners.

—Mike Wallace, *Sixty Minutes*.

I'm asking whether a form of censorship already exists when the news that 40 million Americans receive each night is determined by a handful of men responsible only to their corporate employers. . . .

Censorship must be official, or it isn't censorship. Newsmen editing news is not censorship, even if they do their jobs badly. As for official censorship, it is Mr. Agnew who raises that specter.

—Reuven Frank, president, NBC News, memo to staff, November 26.

If we are to believe a recent report of the House of Representatives Commerce Committee, then television's presentation of the violence in the streets [of Chicago] worked an injustice on the reputation of the Chicago police.

Police violence was a fact of convention week. Were the policemen who committed it a minority? It appears certain that they were—but . . . there has been no public condemnation of these violators of sound police procedures and common decency by either their commanding officers or city officials. . . .

—"The Walker Report," National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, 1968.

But a single company, in the nation's capital, holds control of the largest newspaper in Washington, D.C., and one of the four major television stations, and an all-news radio station, and one of the three major national news magazines—all grinding out the same editorial line. . . .

The Washington Post, Newsweek, WTOP-TV, and WTOP radio decidedly do not "grind out the same editorial line." . . . They disagree on many issues . . . Washington is one of the most competitive communications cities in America by any objective standards. It is one of only three cities left with three major newspapers under separate ownership, all of them first rate.

—Mrs. Katharine Graham, president, Washington Post Company, November 20.

. . . and this is not a subject that you've seen debated on the editorial pages of the Washington "Post" or the New York "Times."

In fact, in an editorial on March 13, 1969, headed "Competition and Monopoly," the *Times* stated, "The constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press provides the press with no warrant for seeking exemption from the laws prohibiting monopoly. If anything, the sanctity attached to press freedom by the First Amendment makes it the special obligation of the press to fight for the broadest extension of that freedom." This is a sentiment that the New York *Times* has expressed repeatedly and still holds.

—Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, president and publisher, New York *Times*, November 20.

When 300 Congressmen and fifty-nine Senators signed a letter endorsing the President's policy on Vietnam, it was news—and it was big news. . . . Yet the next morning the New York "Times" . . . did not carry a word. Why? Why?

The New York *Times* printed the story. Unfortunately, it failed to make the edition that reached Washington but was carried in a later edition of the *Times*. Moreover, the *Times* has given considerable attention to that story as it developed.

—Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, November 20.

The day when the network commentators and even the gentlemen of the New York "Times" enjoyed a form of diplomatic immunity from comment and criticism of what they said is over. . . . [The] time for blind acceptance of their opinions is past.

Such a day, of course, had never dawned (at least) in the state whose punitive legislation against the *Times* some years ago produced the U.S. Supreme Court's controlling libel precedent.

—Harry S. Ashmore, Los Angeles *Times*.

I'm raising these questions so that the American people will become aware of—and think of the implications of—the growing monopoly that involves the voices of public opinion. . . .

If it was suspected from his initial speech . . . it was confirmed by the second: the rap was not against journalists but against liberals, actual or assumed. . . . If Agnew . . . were really interested in responsible news judgment and unbiased reporting, as he professed to be, he would have had to include *Time* magazine, the Chicago *Tribune*, and a host of right-wing newspapers with broadcast properties . . . which apparently earn their exemption through sympathy with the Administration.

—*Variety*, November 26.

* * *

Attorney General John N. Mitchell says the Nixon Administration has no intention of using the anti-trust laws to break up news media concentration. Questioned on a National Educational Television network program after Vice President Agnew's "monopolization" charge, the Attorney General said such action is "the last thing in the world we have under consideration."

—*Publisher's Auxiliary*, December 13.

What hope is there for greater media diversity and access?
A status report and agenda for governmental, media, and citizen groups.

Multiplying media voices

EDWIN DIAMOND

■ Every day at 8 a.m. President Richard M. Nixon finds a looseleaf briefing book on his desk with the label FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY. Inside, neatly typed on the looseleaf sheets, is a summary of news and comment from scores of daily newspapers, a dozen columnists and magazines, the three networks, and a scattering of journals and newsletters—a digest representing the combined rewriting and editing efforts of five White House staff assistants. The briefing book is a highly professional newspaper with a readership of one—one important way the chief executive of the United States tries to keep informed about what voices outside the Administration are saying about him, his policies, the nation he leads, and the parlous times. Though the book's contents are secret, fears that the President's briefing experts supply only a roseate Republican view of the world are apparently unfounded; staff men assure inquirers that the President gets Mary McGrory as well as Stanton Evans—the bitter along with the better, as Jane Ace used to say.

Yet the limits of the briefing book's perspective inevitably match the limits of the American mainstream media themselves. The voices the President hears in his briefing book are:

—Overwhelmingly white, mostly middle-aged, and usually affluent—a fair representation of the “non-black, non-young, non-poor” American electorate that public opinion analyst Richard Scammon says put Mr. Nixon in office and will decide who the next President is in 1972.

—Reflexively Establishment in thought patterns, life style, and outlook. To be sure, the owners of the newspapers, magazines, and radio-TV stations included in the briefing book may be regarded as Republican while a majority of their writers and reporters may be Democrats; but both are generally committed to the commonly received political structures and goals of the present system.

Mr. Nixon, in effect, is unlikely to hear the gravelly, hip voice of Putney Swope, the black advertising man who took over a Madison Avenue agency in Robert Downey's black comedy and announced: “I'm not here to rock the boat. I'm here to sink it.” And the limits of the Presidential view are also shared by ordinary citizens; by inclination, it is their understandable nature to avoid the boat-rockers and the boat-sinkers in order to stay dry and comfortable. Wise editors and advertising men know that people tend to read what reinforces their beliefs; that the ads for Ford cars, for example, are read mostly by people who already own Ford cars and are reminding

Edwin Diamond, former *Newsweek* senior editor, now is writing a book on American university professors.

themselves why they were so wise in their purchase of their car.

But suppose there are some responsible citizens who have a desire to hear something more than the captain's reassuring voice—whether it is a captain of state, industry, education, or labor? He must work to dig out this information. Newspapers, magazines, and radio-TV stations don't come cheap: the Los Angeles *Times* recently paid some \$90 million for the Dallas *Times Herald* and its TV-radio station, a CBS affiliate; *Newsweek*, perhaps the last major magazine bargain, was bought for \$9 million in 1961. Today the boat-rockers and boat-sinkers can't afford such prices. Nor does the interlocking ownership of newspapers, magazines, and radio-TV outlets do much to increase access to fresh, new, and different voices.

Many media barons realize this. They have seen the disenchanting readers and viewers vote with their feet—drop out of the mainstream audience or refuse to take the mass media seriously, and subscribe to the *New York Review of Books* or, among the young blacks in San Francisco, the *Bay Guardian*. And the most enlightened owners also know all the strong ideological arguments against the concentration of major news outlets in fewer private hands.

Not surprisingly, then, there were intense cries of pain when Spiro T. Agnew, like a dentist drilling without novocaine, recently touched this most sensitive media nerve end. His approach was ham-handed, but he knew where the sore point was. Fortunately, there is a remedy for the trouble, and interestingly, the fate of steps to increase the diversity of media voices rests in good part in the hands of the Administration in Washington.

Of course, media with alternative, independent, and sometimes ornery views have existed for decades with no need of government help. Among them are the venerable *New Republic*, the *Nation* on the left and, more recently on the right, the *National Review*. In Washington, I. F. Stone publishes a biweekly which ferrets out stories that the straight press with its twenty-three-man capital news bureaus often overlook. One of the most significant and largely underreported media phenomena is the success of regional gadflies such as

the biweekly *Texas Observer* published in Austin. The *Observer* broke the lugubrious story of the Lyndon Johnson appointee to the U.S. Office of Education who had plagiarized his Ph.D. thesis and for a decade passed himself off as a "Doctor." In Philadelphia, the monthly *Philadelphia* magazine exposed venality on the *Inquirer* and also did a telling portrait of publisher Walter Annenberg, now Ambassador to Great Britain. In Boston, Louis Lyons, former curator of the Nieman Fellowship program, delivers a nightly newscast which usually provides a perspective other newsmen ignore. In Denver, Eugene Cervi regularly takes on the Denver establishment—including its newspapers—in his weekly *Cervi's Journal*.

More recently, major cities and many smaller ones, too, have spawned a counter-culture press for blacks and the dissident or alienated youth; an estimated 150,000 readers throughout the U.S. now read such sheets as the Los Angeles *Free Press*, the *Fifth Estate* in Detroit, the *East Village Other* and the *Village Voice* in New York, the *Berkeley Barb* and the *Black Panther* in the San Francisco area, the *North Carolina Anvil* in Chapel Hill, the *Mississippi Freelance* in Greenville, Miss., the *Florida Observer* in Tallahassee, the *Great Speckled Bird* in Atlanta, and the *Old Mole* in Boston. Only a year ago such papers could be put down as underground efforts, too crude in production and thought to be considered more than the passing scatology of sophomores; today some are so successful that the above-ground press can learn basic journalistic lessons from them. The *Berkeley Barb's* popular Dr. Hip, for instance, gives advice on the medical problems that are really on the minds of young readers—questions about abortion and birth control, the effect of drugs on intercourse, techniques for a better sex life—that don't find their way into Dr. Alvarez's columns for the Geritol crowd. And in Atlanta, the *Bird* dug out, long before the established papers, stories of bus fare increases and the cozy relationship between the Georgia utilities and the State Public Service Commission.

Nothing, in fact, points up the national journalistic flabbiness throughout the 1960s as much as the long list of major news breaks achieved by nonjournalists or writers outside the media main-

stream, from Ralph Nader's auto safety exposes to the surfacing of the Songmy atrocity charges by Seymour Hersh, free-lance former AP man.

Broadcasting, unlike the press, is subject to the laws of physics and of the U.S. Government. Both have conspired to open up a whole new territory within television—the ultra-high frequency (UHF) band that lies between channels 14 and 83 on all late-model TV sets. In 1964, TV sets were equipped only to pick up signals within the very high frequency (VHF) band—channels 2 through 13. Then a federal law required set manufacturers to add the special UHF receivers and antenna. An estimated 60 per cent of all U.S. sets now have the UHF gear. The UHF dials do not click into place and must be fine-tuned; but those viewers who take the time to fiddle are often rewarded with minority-taste programming not found on the 2-13 band. Today there are some 265 UHF'ers in the U.S., about 120 of them commercial stations such as KKOg-TV in Ventura, Calif., which disdains syndicated reruns and daytime Hollywood talk shows for such fare as a bilingual Mexican-American variety program and discussion panels that Venturans can appear on simply by dropping in at the KKOg studio across from the Greyhound bus depot. Independent KKOg, boosted by local advertisers, went into the black in its first year.

In other cities, UHF outlets often point their programming at commercial TV dropouts or the ethnic market. Philadelphia's WPHL presented an eighteen-part Ingmar Bergman film festival, and KMEX in Los Angeles offers only Spanish language programs to the estimated 1.7 million Latin Americans living in Southern California. The general manager of KMEX likens his operation to "being the only TV station in the seventh-largest city in the country."

The UHF band as a whole still does not compete with VHF stations in quality of news coverage, most typically because of financial anemia. But an example of what a municipal UHF station can do for overlooked audiences is provided by WNYC, Channel 31, in New York: parents have been told how to recognize symptoms of drug addiction in their children, and there is a valuable course called "English for Americans." With another push from Washington, click-type UHF

dials would be possible. Then progress would be up to such groups as the Kaiser Broadcasting Corporation, which operates WKBS' (Channel 48) in Philadelphia with a twenty-three-man staff and a \$500,000 annual news budget. Kaiser owns five other UHF stations, the possible nucleus of a new TV "network."

Almost all Americans, however, get their news from commercial television, in particular NBC and CBS. A Louis Harris Poll, taken in late 1969 for *Time*, shows that nine out of ten citizens regularly watch TV news. CBS and NBC split 70 per

"UHF viewers are often rewarded with minority-taste programming..."

cent of this regular viewing public; ABC gets 12 per cent; non-network stations the remainder. Such TV habits impose a social homogeneity on the country that has been much lamented.

Those who want a true fourth network that could be an alternative to the sameness of news and public affairs on the three major commercial networks have rested their hopes for the past decade on National Educational Television. But NET also suffers from money problems—as well as from organizational rivalries between the New York-based headquarters and the individual stations that would require a Niccolo Machiavelli to explicate. Now the noncommercial TV effort has a new name—it is officially called public television rather than the musty, library-sounding educational television—and a new structure. In 1967 Congress established the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to organize public TV on a national basis. Congress, however, failed to provide any permanent funding for the Corporation, and each year CPB will have to ask for new funds. Because of this dependence, some critics—and some staff members within public television—fear that CPB will dance to the piper's tune of Congressional review, eschewing hard-hitting commentary.

These critics see *The Advocates*, the Corporation's first big entry of the 1969-70 season, as an

example of the kind of "balanced format" to be expected when the Government is a co-sponsor. *The Advocates* is nothing if not even-handed. Each week it explores a specific proposal being offered as a solution for one of the nation's major problems. In a live "mock trial" two "advocates" use dialogue, witnesses, and exhibits in an attempt to persuade a "decision-maker," who is usually a legislator involved with the issue being discussed. The underlying idea, according to the show's originator, Roger Fisher—a forty-eight-year-old professor on leave from Harvard Law School—is that TV viewers should be "citizens, not spectators." The Ford Foundation helps pick up the \$3.2 million tab for *The Advocates*.

To date the first dozen programs suggest that the even-handed format at least does not prevent *The Advocates* from debating issues that affect the sponsors: the premiere took up anti-smog legislation in California and two other early shows argued Vietnam and the SST project. On this record, CPB deserves strong governmental support, especially from those who say they are concerned about the monopoly of the media by small "self-elected" bands.

The reach of government most directly affects national commercial television. Under present FCC regulations, a broadcast license must be renewed every three years upon application to the FCC. The theory behind the law, as discussed by Nicholas Johnson on page 28, was to utilize review to make sure that station programming served at least modestly "the public interest"; i.e., offered a modicum of local news, public affairs, and cultural programs in addition to sold commercial time. In practice, the FCC has been a blindfolded monitor: no license has even been withdrawn, though WHDH-TV in Boston (owned by the Boston Herald Traveler Corporation) may be transferred to a competing group if an unprecedented FCC transfer order of last January is upheld in court; and WLBT in Jackson, Miss., also may lose its license as a result of a challenge by a group of blacks and the United Church of Christ [see *CJR*, Fall, 1969].

In recent months, the Jackson, Miss., challenge has been emulated in other cities. Black leaders, including a group called Black Efforts for Soul in

Television, have argued that white-owned media cannot express black consciousness and culture.

The efforts to get "soul" on TV already have achieved some uncredited victories: WPIX in New York, owned and operated by the New York *Daily News*, had a deserved reputation as one of the country's least distinguished stations, notable for its skeleton news staff and *I Love Lucy* reruns. Then blacks organized in New York to challenge its broadcast license; in the months since, WPIX has turned its cameras more on the real problems and lives of the city's minorities.

The other force now loosed upon the FCC licensing procedures is Senator John O. Pastore, the diminutive Rhode Islander who wields enormous power in the broadcast industry through the Senate Communications Subcommittee. The Pastore committee's public hearings on sex and violence had a galvanic influence on the network executives who put together the TV entertainment schedule. The 1969-70 season, by any standard, has been Pastore-ized. Now Pastore is the author of the pending bill that would ban competition for broadcast licenses [see page 28], and his arguments and the blandishments of the broadcast lobby in Washington have won for the bill twenty-five Senate co-sponsors (some of them up for reelection in 1970 and in need of friends). In the House, co-sponsors number 100 Representatives, whose two-year terms—only one year less than the duration of a broadcast license—apparently are no bar to their ability to run their affairs.

There is nothing inherently virtuous in blackness or in whiteness, in bigness or in smallness. And the UHF station in Washington may be a grind house getting by with three old movies a day while at the same time VHF commercial WTOP is offering the case against Judge Clement Haynsworth (WTOP's sister medium, the Washington *Post*, was supporting Haynsworth editorially). But there is a virtue in diversity—in sharpened news coverage and in widened access to print and to the cameras. A number of ideas and techniques have been advanced to achieve these goals:

1. Ben Bagdikian proposed in *CJR* [Spring, 1969] that newspapers devote a full page to the letters column. A year ago *Newsday* publisher

Bill D. Moyers ordered his editorial page editors to concentrate on letters that answer or criticize the paper's editorials. It is interesting that editors are rediscovering this principle of the open forum; in the Soviet Union newspaper editors—particularly editors of youth papers such as *Komsomolskaya Pravda*—regard their letters not just as a means of learning what is on their readers' minds but as the prime way of conducting debates and airing discussions about life on the farm or in the city. The paper claims that it receives no fewer than 3 million such letters a year. In the U.S., a letters page represents only a modest opening wedge; the *Detroit News* had a better idea. Its editors have cleared a whole section, a weekly supplement called *The Other Section*, to let college editors and other outsiders under the age of thirty-five state their views on music, fashions, and, of course, on the failings of the Establishment press.

2. TV news could reexamine its "show biz" style and sports-weather-news approach. A good example of a program that has done this is the well known KQED *Newsroom* on public TV in San Francisco [see *CJR*, Summer, 1969]. KQED concentrates on interpretive reporting of basic "hard news"; there is no compartmentalized crime news, sports, or weather; no frivolous features. It covers the material in considerable depth, doing as few as ten stories in sixty minutes. *Newsroom* looks like a newsroom—a rim around which various beat men tell their stories. The education man, Joe Russin, Harvard-trained and wearing a handlebar moustache, brings a knowledge of what the Board of Regents of the University of California is doing that can't be paralleled on any commercial station in the area.

Not long ago ABC tried bringing in outsiders—thirty of them, in fact, including Joseph Alsop, Bill D. Moyers, I. F. Stone, Ralph Nader, and James Kilpatrick—for comment pieces on its evening network news. According to ABC News vice president William Sheehan, "the show laid an egg," a failure he attributes in part to the fact that the commentators went on at the end of the program when people apparently had had enough of the news. But the argument that ratings will inevitably suffer if there is any tinkering with present holy formulas doesn't hold—KQED is doing

so well that the idea is being exported to other cities.

3. TV can be made into true two-way communication. The potential of cable TV—the "wired city"—is only now being explored. Already, Editor Robert M. White II of the Mexico, Mo., *Ledger*, has turned the cable channel his paper owns into a New England town meeting; three or four times a night during the winter months the cameras show various city politicians, newly arrived teachers, county officials, and in one case a returned Vietnam veteran, who appear in the studio, make a presentation, and then answer live telephone calls from city residents. "The only limit to what we can do on cable TV is our own imagination," says White.

Beyond that, electronics engineer Eugene Leonard, president of Systems Resources Corporation in New York, visualizes the day when every home will have its own computer terminal spliced into a telephone line. Leonard thinks the principle of computer time-sharing now being used in industry could be combined with the philosophy of *The Advocates*. In this way TV debates could be joined by thousands of viewer-voters far beyond the studio—true participatory democracy.

4. The principle of civilian review of the media could be established. Lee Smith, associate editor of *Newsweek*, recently looked into the idea in connection with his work for the Press Section, and found much support for the idea. "There is something very hypocritical and arrogant about us newsmen," he says. "We freely criticize policemen who object to any kind of outside examination of what they are doing and we chide teachers who believe that only they know what should be taught. But then we automatically dismiss civilian review of our news judgment as unprofessional and simply meddling. The record shows that we don't always know what news is or how it should be handled."

How do you get civilian review? An ombudsman is one way. The Louisville *Courier-Journal* two years ago appointed former city editor John Herchenroeder to look into reader complaints against the newspaper. In his first year he checked 400 complaints and in his second year 500, most of them mistakes arising from carelessness rather

than bias. The system has not made Herchenroeder popular with the staff. "Going into the city-room," he says, "I now know how a policeman feels going into the ghetto."

In 1947 a twelve-member commission named by Robert M. Hutchins, then chancellor of the University of Chicago, analyzed the failings of the press and also proposed some sort of ombudsman—an independent agency to appraise and report annually on media performance. The English set up such an agency fifteen years ago to investigate complaints against the British press. Recently, for

"With CATV, television can be true two-way communication..."

example, the press council looked into a complaint against the *News of the World* for publishing the memoirs of Christine Keeler (the allegation: it raked up an old scandal and thus invaded the privacy of people such as John Profumo who have tried to live down their pasts). The council also handles such complaints as staged pictures, fabricated interviews, racial slurs, and the use of subterfuge in getting a story. The council has no legal power, but a reprimand—particularly when published in rival newspapers—has made the British press more conscious of its responsibilities.

As reported in *CJR* last Spring, the Mellett Fund has helped establish at least six functioning local press councils in the United States: in Bend, Ore.; Seattle; Redwood City, Calif.; Cairo and Sparta, Ill.; and St. Louis. Others also have been established by newspapers, including the Newark *Evening News*, Littleton, Colo., *Independent*; and an Indian bi-weekly in Rosebud, S. D.

5. Finally, the media can engage in some mutual criticism and self-examination. There has been no successor to the late A. J. Liebling's column, "The Wayward Press, at the *New Yorker*, and, says editor William Shawn, he has no plans for a successor until he finds "someone who can come up with the standard Liebling set." A. M. Rosenthal, managing editor of the *New York Times*, says he has

considered a column of criticism of the news media but has not moved on it because "we feel that we have a lot more to do to improve ourselves before we start on others." And Reuven Frank, president of NBC News, offers a familiar industry reason for his network's lack of a program of press criticism: "I can't afford to have people switch off, and I don't think people are interested in knowing about the American press."

But if media chiefs will not assume the role, then impatient Indians will. After the battle between the police and the demonstrators in Chicago in 1968, a group of young reporters—angered by their papers' reluctance to criticize Mayor Daley and the police—started the *Chicago Journalism Review*, a monthly catalogue of oversights and, some say, distortions by Chicago newspapers and TV stations. Recently *Review* staff members branched out into a weekly FM radio program of press criticism. Young reporters also are trying to start reviews in New York, Detroit, Albany, and elsewhere. The *Antioch Review*, in its Fall, 1969, issue, initiated a new column of press criticism by veteran newsman James Aronson. Freedom House announced a few weeks ago in New York City a plan for "a continuing analysis of news media performance." And in Washington, the *Post* has not waited on either the young or an enterprising nonprofit organization: the *Post* recently organized a panel of 800 readers the editors can query in detail once a month and ask for periodic evaluations of the paper's performance. Its editors are also contemplating a column, in the tradition of A. J. Liebling, monitoring how the paper is doing its editorial job.

One of the major stories the *Post* surely must cover—whether or not a "Wayward *Post*" column is looking over its shoulder—is how the Administration and Congress respond to the opportunities they now have to increase the number and diversity of voices heard throughout the country. Technical help for a UHF band that is only beginning to strike up, aid to cable and pay TV, no-strings support for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and defeat of the Pastore Bill and Newspaper Preservation Act would be of immense help in broadening the speakers' platform. If now is not the time, when?

NICHOLAS JOHNSON

"The issue before us ought to be stated starkly. It is, quite simply, who is to retain the potential to rule America."

What the FCC must do

■ Virtually every country in the world treats broadcasting as an activity possessed of unique public responsibilities. In many countries—Scandinavia among them—all stations are owned and programmed by an agency of government or a public corporation. Other nations have recently supplemented their public broadcasting facilities with the competition of privately owned, commercial stations—subject to government regulation. Japan is an example. When England supplemented its world-famous BBC with a commercial "independent television service" the new stations continued to be publicly owned. They are merely programmed, during portions of the week, by various programming companies licensed for fixed terms by the Independent Television Authority (ITA). (Unlike the FCC, the ITA has been quite freely encouraging competition by refusing to renew some companies' authority.)

During the debates on the Radio Act of 1927 and the Communications Act of 1934, Senators and Congressmen repeatedly expressed their awareness of the potential economic and political power of this industry, its great opportunity and

responsibility, and the need for a close public check upon it. As early as November, 1927, Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover urged at the Fourth National Radio Conference that each applicant for a broadcast license be required to prove "that there is something more than naked commercial selfishness in his purpose. . . . [W]e should not freeze the present users of wave lengths permanently in their favored position, irrespective of their service." In 1927 and 1934 Congress purposefully provided that an FCC license would be only "for the use . . . but not the ownership" of the assigned frequency. A six-month license term was originally specified. Later, as the industry gained political power, this term was extended to one year and then to three years. (Recently the industry has been urging a *five-year* term!)

After the original term the FCC must make an *affirmative finding*, every three years, that a renewal of the license will serve the public interest; it is not, like a license to practice law, something that lasts for life unless revoked. The FCC may refuse to renew, and grant the license to another party. Thus the licensee's relationship to the Government is very much like that of a highway contractor—he is free to bid against others for an extension of the profitable relationship, but he is not entitled to an additional term as a right. As

Nicholas Johnson is a member of the Federal Communications Commission and author of the forthcoming book *How to Talk Back to Your Television Set*. This article is based on his testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on Communications concerning S.2004, the "Pastore Bill."

Judge Warren Burger said for the U.S. Court of Appeals, "after nearly five decades of operation the broadcast industry does not seem to have grasped the simple fact that a broadcast license is a public trust subject to termination for breach of duty."

For a variety of reasons, the system simply hasn't worked as intended. As in so many other instances of "regulation" of an industry, the FCC has permitted irresponsibility to run rampant—under its imprimatur and protection. Lest there be any doubt about the drubbing the public has taken under its leadership, consider these cases:

—The FCC once decided that a radio station proposing thirty-three minutes of commercials per hour would be serving the public interest. (*Accomack-North Hampton Broadcasting Co.*, 1967.)

—It permitted the wholesale transfer of construction permits from one licensee to another, prompting the Special Investigations Subcommittee of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee to conclude in 1969: "The Commission apparently confused its role as guardian of the public interest with that of guardian of the private interest."

—The FCC approved a license transfer application for a station that quite candidly conceded it proposed to program no news and no public affairs at all. (*Herman C. Hall*, 1968.)

—When presented with charges that a Southern station was engaged in racist programming, the FCC first refused to let the complainants participate in the case, then found that the station's performance entitled it to a license renewal. (*Lamar Life Broadcasting Co.*, [WLBT], 1965; 1968.) Even technical violations get little attention. Recently the Commission refused to consider revoking the license of a station whose owner, it was charged, had ordered his engineer to make fraudulent entries in the station's log book, operated with an improperly licensed engineer, and whose three stations had amassed eighty-seven other technical violations over a three-year period.

Violations of the most elementary principles of good business practice don't arouse the Commission to action. Recently the FCC examined the

record of a station guilty of bilking advertisers out of \$6,000 in fraudulent transactions. The local Better Business Bureau had complained. The station was already on a one-year "probationary" license status for similar offenses earlier. The result? The majority had no difficulty finding the station had "minimally met the public interest standard," and it therefore renewed the license. (*Star Stations of Indiana, Inc.* [WIFE], 1969.)

Every industry requires some minimal standards—in this instance, of programming, advertising, ownership patterns, technical performance, and business practices. The FCC is not providing them. Nor is the industry doing any better with "self regulation." The New York Code manager of the National Association of Broadcasters Code of Good Practice, Warren Braren, recently resigned rather than continue to work with an organization so little concerned about its own standards. When the Eisenhower Commission on violence addressed the matter of the industry's "self regulation" of violence, it concluded, "The television industry has consistently argued that its standards for the portrayal of violence and its machinery for enforcement of these standards are adequate to protect the public interest. We do not agree."

If FCC regulation hasn't worked, and industry self-regulation is even weaker, what alternatives are there?

There are two principles to which we are deeply committed in America: competition and democracy. Institutions spring up from time to time that deviate from these principles, but we eventually bring them into conformity. And if we cannot create pure "competition" or "democracy" in a situation we try to simulate them; to make the institutions work as if competition and popular control were a check upon them. So it has been with broadcasting.

We want the American people to have "the best"—the best cameras, copying machines, television programming. Every businessman takes a risk of losing his position in the market. A multi-million-dollar plant can become worthless overnight. Bankruptcy rates are high. Those are risks the American people, and their government, are willing to take; those are risks the American busi-

nessman is willing to exchange for the opportunity to make great profits. When the Polaroid camera came on the market, no one concerned himself about providing protection to conventional camera makers and their "right" to continue in business. No one thought of requiring Xerox first to prove that conventional copying machines were not serving the public interest, before displacing other manufacturers' positions in the market. What we do as a people, in effect, is to subject the products offered for sale to a "comparative hearing"; the one that wins is rewarded with handsome profits, the one that loses may suffer losses in the millions.

This kind of pure competition cannot work in TV programming. There are only a limited number of available frequencies; the demand exceeds the supply. There is no way that the new programming idea can find its way into the marketplace. Our typically American solution has been to try to simulate that market process. Congress has provided that no one has a "right" to have his station license extended beyond its original term, that competing applications can be filed, that they must be considered by the people's representatives (the FCC), that programming proposals will be compared, and that the people will thus be assured "the best" in television programming as in other areas of their lives.

To select "the best" is a pragmatic approach. The best may not be very good. It may be an unexpected deviation from our previous standards. But standards tend, by their nature, to be minimal and conventional. One of the beauties of competition is that it is innovative. You cannot "predict" a Polaroid, a Xerox, or a transistor; but you want a system that makes them available to the people when they come along. It is impossible to define the "perfect note." But it is possible for us to determine which of two notes is the higher. That is what the FCC must do when comparing programming proposals.

Not only does competition lead to innovation from newcomers to an industry; it also offers a spur to improve performance on the part of those already in the business. The broadcasters have complained that unless competing applications are curtailed, those in the business will have to

cut back on investment in programming. In fact, the broadcasters' response to competitive challenges has not been to cut back upon programming; they have responded to competition like any other industry. *Variety* reports:

The recent wave of license challenges . . . has without question raised the level of program aspiration in most major markets, and particularly in those where the jump applications were filed. There is on the whole discernably more local involvement, more community affairs and educational programming, more news and discussion and more showcasing of minority talent since the license challenges than there were before.

This is healthy; it's American; it benefits everyone.

The argument is made by some broadcasters that they cannot fight "blue sky" promises from a fly-by-night applicant for their license. Of course, this could be a theoretical problem. But the FCC

"We must have some national plan for allocating television channels . . ."

has had more than forty years' experience in evaluating programming proposals—and the financial and professional ability of applicants to deliver on them. Its record is pretty good. It can be expected to continue to be biased in favor of the existing operator, and to take a very realistic look at competing proposals. Moreover, the incumbent operator is in the very best position to reply to impractical proposals. He may have tried some of them, and can explain why they didn't work. The "blue sky" objection to competing applications simply cannot withstand close analysis.

The benefits of competition are not limited to comparative evaluation of programming proposals. Ownership is also a legitimate consideration. In many communities the FCC has permitted the owner of the only AM station to acquire the only FM because there were no competing applications for the FM. The public is better off, the majority

has reasoned, with the additional service run by a monopolist than without it at all. If there is only one man in town who wants to run the morning and evening newspaper, TV station, and AM-FM radio stations, there's not much the FCC can do about it short of shutting down some of these facilities. When a potential new operator comes along there is.

Nor is competitive ownership limited to considering the number of commercial operators. Blacks, who now own less than ten of the 7,500 operating stations and none of the nation's TV stations, believe themselves even further excluded from participation in the ownership of the most valuable stations by the "Pastore Bill." It is no solution to argue that minority groups should be satisfied with access to ownership of the most undesirable properties—those which at best promise short-term losses and a minimal possibility for long-run viability. Nor can we expect that blacks will be able in the near future to acquire the most desirable properties by bidding in the virtually free market for broadcast licenses. This bill will cut off the only avenue to responsible minority participation in the ownership and operation of broadcast stations. And "minority groups" change. That's why ownership should remain as flexible ten years from now as today. Mexican-Americans and the American Indians are beginning to get organized. Senior citizens, the young (a major portion of the radio audience), and the new-found "Middle America" are also "minority groups."

There are other alternatives to station ownership by white businessmen. Congress and the FCC have provided a great deal of encouragement to the competition known as "educational broadcasting." Hopefully, we both intend to provide it even more support. But many communities are now without VHF educational TV stations, or AM educational radio stations. Should competing applications for these facilities from public broadcasting stations be forever prohibited in these communities? There are now audience-supported radio stations in the area of New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, Seattle, and St. Louis. These stations provide a noncommercial service so valued by the audience that it is willing to sustain the programming with voluntary

contributions. This is yet another pattern of alternative ownership and competition.

What if a community group offered to operate a local commercial station on a nonprofit basis, plowing the money from commercials back into programming and other broadcast-related activities? Should the community be denied this service? Should consideration of this "competing application" be refused until the FCC has first found that one of the local stations is not serving the public interest (or, in Chairman Burch's proposed language, that it is not "substantially . . . attuned to meeting the needs and interests of its area")?

The practical advantages of competition aside, there is even some question as to whether the "Pastore Bill" is Constitutional. The First Amendment flatly bars Congress from enacting laws abridging the freedoms of speech and the press. If Congress were to state that only one, two, or three persons would be permitted to operate newspapers in any one community, such a law would clearly violate the Constitution. And if Congress were to state that no more than three named persons could use "soap boxes" to speak in a public park at a time, such a law would also violate the Constitution. Free speech is not truly "free" if one

"Broadcasting cannot be immune from the wave of citizen participation..."

is forced to speak in a closet. The First Amendment sanctions, not just "speech," but "effective speech" [*Edwards v. South Carolina, 1963; Saia v. New York, 1948*]; the effectiveness of this speech depends on the existence and nature of an appropriate forum. There is no more appropriate "public forum" today than the radio and television media. It does no good to say that citizens have the rights of free speech and press, and then deny them access to the most important methods of communication to modern man: the broadcast media.

So much for "competition." The other basic

principle is "democracy," or as the redundant expression has it, "participatory democracy." Our country is caught up in a wave of citizen and consumer participation. We have suddenly become aware of just how unrepresentative and unresponsive our major institutions are. We are reforming our national party structure and procedures. Citizen panels are being established to review complaints against the police, and to participate in local educational policy. Increasing amounts of education, leisure time, and disposable income are creating an exponential growth in the number of people who want, and know how to get, "a piece of the action."

Broadcasting cannot expect to be immune. During the 1968 Presidential campaign each candidate made participatory democracy a part of his program. President Nixon talked of listening posts to hear directly from the people; George Wallace urged the return of more power from Washington to local communities; Robert Kennedy spoke of "participatory democracy"; and Eugene McCarthy, of "the new politics." Hubert Humphrey used similar rhetoric. The challenge is to devise systems that leave the people as much opportunity as possible for participating in the decisions that affect their lives. In a densely populated, highly industrialized nation there will be a need for a great many national decisions.

In broadcasting, we must arrive at some national plan for the allocation of TV channels across the country. But who operates those stations, and what they program, need not be determined nationally. There is a balance between popular control and federal regulation. When we can devise ways meaningfully to involve the public in the regulatory process we thereby reduce the need for government-initiated regulation.

What can we do? FCC Commissioner Kenneth Cox and I have set forth our modest efforts at programming evaluation and standards in opinions dealing with renewals in Oklahoma, New York, and the Washington, D. C., area. These studies—especially the latter two—represent an effort to rank stations by common criteria. It is an effort to stimulate competition, or the comparative hearing process. It provides a means whereby the Commission could, if it so chose, un-

dertake a more thorough review of the performance of those stations that rank in the bottom 25 per cent or 10 per cent. So far, as Professor Louis L. Jaffe has noted, "The Commission has not seen its way clear even to respond on the merits" to this suggestion.

Congressman John Moss of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee has urged that public renewal hearings be held in the com-

"The FCC could give the public aid like that given broadcasters..."

munities where the stations are located. Local hearings might prove impractical for all communities, but encompassing the top hundred markets would require less than three additional hearings a month for FCC examiners.

There are other ways of telling the public of its rights in the license renewal process. Full-page ads and repeated, intelligible radio and TV announcements could be used—instead of the present small-print legal notices and rare and perfunctory broadcast announcements. The FCC could provide the same kind of information and assistance to public groups interested in the renewal process that it now provides broadcasters when its top staff travels about, speaking, answering questions, and distributing literature and helpful hints to licensees about to fill out renewal forms. Most important, if public participation is to work effectively, Congress and the Commission must recognize the tremendous handicap in financial and professional resources that any public group confronts when competing against a well established broadcaster. There must be some economic incentive for the protesting group. The possibility of competing applications, with the ultimate reward of obtaining the license, is such an incentive—and another reason why competing applications should not be discouraged.

The law has often recognized the need for such incentives. Treble damages are awarded in some

LOST—in the daily mass of information?



STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD! Read

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS

Send me a complimentary copy of the current issue and enter a one-year subscription to the Review—5 issues in all—for \$6. (Regular prices: \$1.75 single copy, \$6 a year for 4 issues).

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____



FREE! With each new
subscription —

\$1.95 paperback of the first annual
duPont-Columbia Survey of
Broadcast Journalism 1968/69

☐ check enclosed

☐ bill me

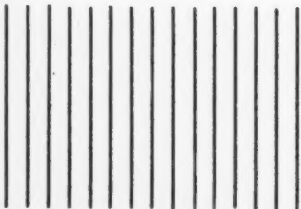
N

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL No Postage Stamp Necessary if Mailed in the United States

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW
602 JOURNALISM • COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10027

FIRST CLASS
PERMIT No. 22712
NEW YORK, N. Y.



antitrust cases, as an incentive to private policing rather than the alternative of more government action. Statutes provide the award of attorneys' fees in some instances. Other agencies—like the National Labor Relations Board or the Neighborhood Legal Services Project of the Office of Economic Opportunity—provide lawyers directly to complaining parties.

There are 7,500 stations in this country. All the licenses in a given state come up for renewal at the same time. With three-year terms, this means roughly 2,500 a year. Even if the FCC were to take away two or three licenses a year—something it has yet to do during its forty-two-year history—we would still be providing rubber stamp renewals to 99.9 per cent of the stations. Professor Jaffe has posed the question "whether a communication industry financed by private capital can be run on a three-year basis." Given an industrywide average 100 per cent rate of return annually on depreciated tangible investment, and a 99.9 per cent (or better) probability of license renewal, I would agree with Professor Jaffe that "once the question is asked it appears to be almost rhetorical."

The really outstanding broadcaster has little to fear. He knows the people of his community and they know him. He heads off legitimate complaints before they become serious. He seeks out representatives from all segments of his audience, including potential protestors, even before they look for him. He knows such an approach is good, audience-building business—as well as public service. Any group seriously looking for a license to challenge is going to go after the station with the worst record in town, not his station.

Further, there is no reason why the FCC need hold long, useless, harassing hearings. Administrative practice is flexible enough to permit the FCC to draft hearing issues tightly, and to use informal pre-hearing procedures, to dispose of the frivolous cases quickly. (In fact, the most innovative current development has been the negotiated "settlements" in Texarkana and Rochester between outraged citizens and local broadcasters; renewal hearings were contemplated, then dropped, in exchange for concessions.)

Finally, if anyone in or out of the industry is seriously interested in helping to draft standards for the comparative evaluation of stations' license renewal, their contribution will be most welcome. In our renewal opinions, Commissioner Cox and I have called on the academic community to devote some of its intellectual resources to this problem. So far there has been no response.

It is significant, I believe, that the FCC is officially on record as opposing the "Pastore Bill." Its members feel deeply enough about it to have presented an unusual number of personally prepared statements. Some believe the present procedure—if made to work—is best. Others have attempted to fashion compromise positions that give away

*"If we preserve
the people's potential
to participate, perhaps
there is hope..."*

less than the bill. None, however, on the old Commission, offered the bill their enthusiastic support. Only one Commissioner does so now, in a most summary and general statement.

The issue before us ought to be stated starkly. It is, quite simply, who is to retain the potential to rule America. We know, if we are honest with ourselves, which segments of the economic and social structure have the loudest voices in the decision-making process in Washington. But the *potential* for popular check remains. It remains, however, only so long as the people can obtain education and information, only so long as they can communicate with each other, only so long as they can retain potential control over the mass media of this country. So long as we preserve the people's *potential* to rule—their *potential* opportunity to participate in the operation of their mass media—there is some hope, however small, that some future generation—perhaps the next—will use this potential to rebuild America.

"Some powerful men," says the *Wall Street Journal*,
"are asking for special-interest legislation."

Newspaper "preservation"—or monopoly?

□ Last November 6, the Senate Judiciary Committee recommended for Senate approval a measure artfully named the "Newspaper Preservation Bill." Originally introduced thirty-two months earlier as the "Failing Newspaper Act," it would create an exemption from antitrust laws for newspaper joint operating agreements; the separately owned dailies involved could fix their advertising rates, split pooled profits on a predetermined ratio, and otherwise eliminate competition between themselves. The bill would overrule the Supreme Court decision of last March involving the *Tucson Citizen* and *Star*, where such provisions of joint agreements—but not the agreements themselves—were held illegal.

What is the evidence offered in support of the claim that the bill is needed to preserve second newspapers in various cities? Certainly not financial statements of allegedly "failing" papers. What is offered, basically, is the fact that many daily newspapers in American cities have failed during recent decades, and that the number of two-publisher cities has decreased to approximately sixty-three. But with only a very few exceptions, the papers whose deaths the sponsors toll—the *Detroit Times*, *San Francisco News*, *Los Angeles Examiner*, *Cleveland News*, *Philadelphia Ledger*, *New York World Journal Tribune*, and so forth—were not second voices but were at least third. Those cities still have two publishers. And the deaths of those papers do not necessarily evidence a trend that will continue, unless stopped, until the number of publishers in each city is further reduced from two to one. The failure of third or fourth newspapers—newspapers competing with at least two others, and with at least one other in the same morning or afternoon market—tells us nothing about the likelihood of failure after the number of papers has been reduced to two, each of which has a monopoly of its morning or afternoon market.

We therefore should look for some facts indicating whether a trend now exists toward the disappearance of second newspaper voices. It should first be recognized, however, that the central-city frame of reference is misleading. The number of dailies in 1968 was almost exactly that of 1945; while many papers failed in central cities, many new ones were established in the suburbs, where population was moving. In hundreds of populous suburban communities—some twenty or

more in the New York and Los Angeles metropolitan areas, for example—a "suburban" daily competes vigorously with one or more "metropolitan" papers.

But is there a trend toward the loss of second voices even in central cities? Bruce Sagan, a publisher of weekly papers in San Diego and Chicago, did produce such facts at 1968 hearings, listing cities which have lost a second newspaper voice and gained a second one since 1961. I have updated Mr. Sagan's facts, based on *Editor & Publisher Yearbooks* for 1961 and 1969.

The record shows that twenty-two American cities have lost their second newspaper voice in this decade, but of these, only four have estimated populations above 150,000—Milwaukee, Indianapolis, St. Petersburg, Fla., and Jackson, Miss.—and only one other, Lima, O., is larger than 50,000. Eleven cities have gained a second voice: Oklahoma City (410,000), Fremont, Calif. (108,000), and only two other cities larger than 50,000 (Bloomington, Ind., and Oshkosh, Wis.). In at least eight other cities a new second daily was started but no longer existed in 1969.

St. Petersburg's inclusion is questionable because the same "standard metropolitan area" includes Tampa, with a separately owned daily. The paper that failed in Jackson was only eight years old. The *Milwaukee Sentinel* was closed by a strike when sold.

Thus there is no significant trend, if any at all, toward the disappearance of second dailies in cities larger than 50,000.

The absence of trends toward the loss of second papers in cities larger than 50,000, and especially in cities larger than 200,000, is of crucial importance. For with only a very few exceptions, the papers the "Preservation Bill" is supposedly needed to "preserve" are in cities large enough to be out of danger. Of the twenty-two or twenty-four cities that now have joint-operating agreements (some lists add Spokane and Lynchburg, Va., to the more commonly listed twenty-two), exactly two cities—Bristol, Tenn.-Va., and Franklin-Oil City, Pa.—have populations smaller than 50,000. And of the twenty-four cities only four—those two, Lincoln, Neb., and Lynchburg, Va.—have standard metropolitan area populations of less than 200,000.

The conclusion that the bill is not needed is also verified by a simple fact of economic behavior. If the less successful of the two papers in town were on the way to failure—as supporters of the bill contend must

be the case—it would be irrational for the more successful publisher to agree to split his profits with the other, rather than waiting for the monopoly profits that would eventually accrue to him alone. The willingness of the stronger of the two papers to enter into a profit-sharing agreement demonstrates that, at least in that publisher's opinion, the alternative would not be monopoly, but competition.

One must then take account of the fact that the two papers need not bear the high costs of operating independently of each other. The Supreme Court made clear in the *Tucson Citizen* and *Star* case that joint operating agreements are not illegal as such, but only if they involve price-fixing, profit-pooling, or compacts not to compete. Newspapers are thus free to enter into joint operating agreements for a wide variety of joint functions and thus for large cost savings compared to independent operation. The Justice Department, too, has consistently taken this position, and has never suggested that all joint-operating agreements are illegal. In negotiating with the Tucson newspapers, the Department has agreed to provisions for joint printing, joint distribution, and joint administrative, accounting, and business functions not related to sales efforts, plus a combination advertising rate (so long as the discount is based on the cost savings), a joint circulation department (subject to a hearing), and—a crucial point—a Sunday paper.

Of the forty-four or forty-eight papers now involved in joint-operating agreements, approximately one-quarter are owned by large chains such as Scripps-Howard, Newhouse, Hearst, Knight, and Cox.

Testimony given by executives of the chains makes clear that they will be in the vanguard of the movement to form still more joint-operating agreements if the bill is passed. No fewer than seven of the newspapers involved in the present combinations are owned by Scripps-Howard. That corporation owns some sixteen daily newspapers, four television stations, the UPI wire service, and many other sources of profits and power. Another applicant, Newhouse, now owns or has substantial interests in some twenty-two daily newspapers, seven television stations, twenty CATV operations, and twenty nationally distributed magazines—what was described in a recent antitrust suit as “the greatest concentration of power over the dissemination of news, ideas, and advertising which has ever been placed in the hands of one person in the U.S.” Another is Hearst, which has managed its papers badly but still has eight entrenched dailies, as well as three large-city television stations, six radio stations, much land, and other interests.

Apart from the chains, other newspapers involved in the joint-operating agreements are owned by companies such as San Francisco's Chronicle Publishing, which has a TV station with annual profits of some \$6 million. The gist of what is going on here was succinctly stated last August 4 in the analytical story

by Arlen Large in the *Wall Street Journal*: “To put it plainly, some powerful men are asking for special-interest legislation.”

The fact is that technological developments are now creating once again the possibility of new competition in the metropolitan newspaper markets. As stated in a recent article in the *Harvard Law Review*: “the cost structure of newspaper publishing promises to undergo a rapid improvement within the next decades which should substantially increase competitive opportunity.” As stated by John H. Biddle, a newspaper industry witness at the Senate hearings: “Offset printing and ‘cold type’ composition make practical the founding of new newspapers not economically feasible for many years.” Mr. Biddle buttressed his statement by pointing to the founding of thirty-three daily newspapers during the past three years.

Joint-operating agreements employing practices the bill would legalize pose the highest barrier to the entry of new competition. As pointed out by Richard McLaren, chief of the Justice Department's Antitrust Division, they are distinctly more forbidding in this respect than one-publisher monopolies, even where the publisher has morning and afternoon papers.

The Supreme Court has stated, and it repeated in the Tucson case:

Freedom to publish means freedom for all and not for some. Freedom to publish is guaranteed by the Constitution, but freedom to combine to keep others from publishing is not.

In the recent *Red Lion* case, upholding the FCC's Fairness Doctrine for broadcasters, the Supreme Court also declared:

It is the purpose of the First Amendment to preserve an uninhibited marketplace of ideas in which truth will ultimately prevail, rather than to countenance monopolization of that market, whether it be by the Government itself or a private license.

No case has been made for the proposition that the “Newspaper Preservation Bill” is needed to save any of the papers it is supposed to save. Meanwhile, the bill would do much serious harm—by exempting powerful corporations from basic free-enterprise principles designed to protect the public, by foreclosing daily newspaper competition forever from many metropolitan markets, and by tampering fundamentally with the historic independence of the press.

STEPHEN R. BARNETT

The author is an acting professor of law at the University of California at Berkeley. His comments are adapted from testimony before the Anti-Trust Subcommittee of the House Committee on the Judiciary.

JAMES McCARTNEY

Must the media be 'used'?

In the age of public relations, "managed news," and pseudo-events, the media must revise coverage procedures or continue to be exploited.

■ Not long ago columnist and associate editor Tom Wicker of the *New York Times* mused at a casual lunch that he believed the Washington press corps had flopped miserably in reporting the Vietnam War. "Our failure on Vietnam is an indictment of the entire press corps," he said. "It was our greatest failure." In his opinion, Lyndon Johnson might not have been able to escalate the Vietnam conflict into a full-scale war had the press more skillfully dramatized the Administration's misrepresentations and the shortcomings of what Wicker calls its "Munich psychology"; a Tet Offensive then would not have been necessary to show the public that Mr. Johnson's version of what was happening in Vietnam was false.

"I am convinced that we did our historic job in reporting it all accurately," said Wicker, who was *Times* Washington bureau chief during the period of the escalation. "We knew what the Government was up to. I suppose I was one of the few people in Washington who could get the President of the United States on the phone if I had to, to check an important point. But that wasn't enough. I'm not sure in looking back now that sometimes we didn't do more harm than good by just telling it as the Administration said it was."

In retrospect, examples of Pentagon misrepresentation now seem almost inconceivable. Take

Defense Secretary Robert McNamara's misrepresentations on the troop buildup. On October 14, 1966, McNamara returned from his eighth "fact-finding" mission to South Vietnam and declared, "I see no reason to expect any significant increase in the level or tempo of operations in South Vietnam, nor do I see any reason to believe that deployments of U.S. forces to that country will change significantly in the future." The number of U.S. troops at that time was 331,000. In the months to come the troop level steadily rose at a rate of more than 10,000 a month—a massive effort. By the following April—six months after McNamara's flat statement—more than 100,000 new troops had been sent to Vietnam. McNamara's remarks were made just three weeks before the 1966 Congressional elections.

The *Times* and other papers, in the traditional manner of the press, reported the statements and the figures. They held a mirror up to Lyndon Johnson's declarations and sought to report accurately all that was said. What more could one ask of the press? Wicker, among others, today asks more. It could be that the families of more than 40,000 Americans killed in Vietnam would ask more, too. For it is apparent that the press was often used by the Johnson Administration to merchandise its Vietnam policies—policies a majority of the public now believe were a mistake.

The surface story of other aspects of Mr. Johnson's salesmanship is now well known: the highly

James McCartney is a national correspondent for the *Knight Newspapers*, based in Washington.

publicized "peace offensives" while more and more troops were plunged into the war, right up to his last day in the White House; the troops that would be starting home by Christmas; the light at the end of the tunnel; the innumerable "turning points" that never came. This process went on from 1965, when the President began to escalate the war, until 1968—when Senator Eugene McCarthy and the reality of the Tet Offensive provided catalysts to begin to stop it. It took almost three years for public opinion to form and to make itself felt.

The Vietnam War is only Exhibit A, the classic, still under-researched case of the using of the press by a powerful government in the 1960s. But it illustrates what the U.S. Government—or any other determined and talented body of men—can do with modern media if they put their minds to it and employ proven techniques.

The press is often used. The federal government is so accustomed to using it for its own ends that Presidents become annoyed and irritable when they find, to their surprise, that on some occasions they cannot do so. This is the context in which Vice President Spiro Agnew's remarks about the news media belong. Agnew was frustrated and angry because some analysts and commentators criticized President Nixon's November 3 speech on Vietnam. Agnew had nothing to say about the fact that day after day, week in and week out, most White House plays designed to build a favorable image of the President and his administration, are dumped undigested on a public which often does not have sufficient time or information to evaluate them on its own.

The immense prestige of the U.S. Presidency today leads the media to make a giant of any man who holds the job, regardless of his personal limitations. The most innocuous statement from President Nixon is often treated as though it were a pronouncement of intrinsic worth from on high.

Nixon announces a campaign against crime in the District of Columbia. It draws huge headlines, but is not implemented. In the press, Nixon is a battler against crime. Nixon tells a meeting of governors that drug addiction is a "national problem" requiring a nationwide campaign of education. His program has no teeth and represents little change. In the press, Nixon is a battler

against the evils of dope. Nixon tells a White House conference that hunger must end. He has no new program, and resists efforts of conference moderates to obtain a declaration of a national hunger emergency. Says the *Washington Star*, in an eight-column streamer: NIXON PRESSES DRIVE ON HUNGER. Nixon states in his campaign for the Presidency that "the war in Vietnam must end." As it turns out, his program for Vietnam is not to end the war at all, but rather to turn it over to South Vietnam so that it can continue, perhaps indefinitely. This is explained many months later by Defense Department witnesses before a Congressional committee. The distinction is essentially lost in the press.

Nixon, in a nationally televised speech on Vietnam in May, claims to have taken "new" initiatives to try to break open the Paris peace talks with an eight-point proposal. White House National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger describes the proposal as "new" and "important." Five of the eight points had been proposed, in essentially the same form, by the Johnson Administration as early as 1966. The other three were repetitions of positions stated by Peace Negotiator Henry Cabot Lodge four months earlier. But the press blithely conveys the deception.

No one knows this game better than Richard Nixon, whose talents for using the press, if he could be graded, would range somewhere between B-plus and A-minus. But he still must rank behind former President John F. Kennedy, who perfected some of the techniques Mr. Nixon is using today. Kennedy created a sense of movement and excitement in Washington that persists in the Kennedy legend—and defies all logic when judged by legislation actually passed or changes actually achieved.

But it is not just the President who uses the press. So does anyone else who has a cause to plead and has the talent and imagination to calculate how it can be done. A nation can be escalated into war, but so also can an administration be toppled. The anti-war demonstrators have learned their lessons. Their use of the press at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago belongs in an anthology of masterworks.

The role of TV in this drama has often been discussed. Hubert H. Humphrey is a convert to the

theory that his campaign was mortally damaged on the nation's picture tubes by a cruel juxtaposing of violence in Chicago streets with convention hall proceedings. The net impression, he has said, was that Humphrey was the candidate of violence; he never lived it down. This bit of artful staging was intentional enough on the part of the leaders of the demonstrations, although they could hardly have predicted the active cooperation of the Chicago police department, whose members responded to the plot as though they had been rehearsed.

An equally impressive feat of stage-managing, however, was performed for the written press in the weeks and months before the convention. The objective of at least some of the demonstration leaders was to create a confrontation with police. This would dramatize the Establishment's "support" of the Vietnam War. If troops could be enticed to the scene, the convention could provide televised evidence of a militaristic society. But to create this confrontation, it would be necessary to have police in large numbers and, if possible, troops. Somehow city officials would have to be convinced that terror was in the wind. They would also have to be convinced that massive numbers of demonstrators would be descending—so massive as to be unmanageable by normal forces.

The campaign began across the country early in June. Predictions, freely given, were that as many as half a million demonstrators would be moving on Chicago. Some of the most effective ploys were products of the Yippies—the Youth International Party. They dreamed up bizarre plots: LSD would be put in Chicago's drinking water; carpet tacks would be scattered at major interchanges of the expressway system; power stations would be threatened; the city would be brought to its knees.

Chicago's *American*, owned by the *Tribune*, proved particularly susceptible to outrageous predictions. The more egregious they became, the more serious the *American* took them in its news columns. For months before the convention, it reported that hundreds of thousands of "revolutionaries" were coming to Chicago. Thus a tiny minority of virtually unknown, youthful revolutionaries used the press to spark the idea that the entire group of demonstrators would be bent on tearing the city down. A few agitators who under-

stood the predispositions of the press toward oversimplification and sensational predictions made a major contribution to an atmosphere of fear and tension. In particular, the demonstrators understood the passion of TV for action shots. On the eve of the convention one group obligingly staged rehearsals—for the cameras—showing how they would break police lines. No statement or prediction seemed too eccentric to get TV attention.

All of this had its effect on Mayor Richard J. Daley. The Mayor panicked. The degree to which he was baited is perhaps best illustrated by his de-

*"Presidents get annoyed
when they are unable
to 'use' the press..."*

cision to reject a request from anti-war demonstrators for a permit to use Soldier Field, a lake-front amphitheater that seats 100,000. Had the Mayor granted that permit he would have called the bluff of the demonstrators; the crowd they eventually assembled in Chicago numbered fewer than 15,000. It would have been lost in Soldier Field.

In the city's official televised report on convention-week rioting, "daily press reports" were cited as major elements in justifying security measures. Counting police, national guardsmen, and regular Army troops, Daley assembled a security force of more than 25,000 men. They outnumbered the demonstrators almost two to one. Just as some of the demonstrators during convention week baited the police into violence with obscene language, or by throwing human feces, some of their leaders baited Mayor Daley before the convention through the press.

As Max Ways has written in *Fortune*, "the demonstration has become the dominant form of social action" in modern American society "rather than the petition, the political debate, or the lawsuit." A demonstration provides movement and action for the cameras that no petition can. The demonstrators showed in Chicago that they can be

just as adept at using the media as can the White House.

Moreover, just as a case can be made that the media were used by Lyndon Johnson in the buildup and perpetuation of the war, and by demonstrators to play a major role in driving Johnson's party from power, still another case can be made that Richard Nixon used the press more cleverly than any Presidential candidate before him to find his way to the White House. This is perhaps the third side of the triangle.

Here we have the phenomenon of a Presidential candidate who, early in the 1968 political year, came to a deliberate and calculated decision to bypass the writing press and carry his cause directly to the public via the imagery of TV. Like no Presidential candidate before him, he was packaged as though he were a bar of soap. The quiet genius behind all this was Harry Treleven, onetime creative director of the J. Walter Thompson Agency, with generous help from Frank Shakespeare, onetime vice president of the Columbia Broadcasting System. The two decided on the image they wanted as early as the New Hampshire primary in February: they wanted a friendly, homey Richard Nixon, personable, experienced, well informed. Their vehicle was the TV tube, operating from a completely controlled studio situation. They would present their candidate, live and in color, being questioned by "average Americans"—handpicked by the GOP.

This was the Studio Campaign, directed to the nation's living rooms and conducted right up to election day. Only rarely was the candidate exposed to questioning from the working press that made up most of his campaign entourage. Reporters were treated to a repetition of the same, basic campaign speech in various parts of the country. The major sop thrown to them was a few extra, contrived paragraphs, to be inserted into the basic speech—a "release" for a.m.'s on a typical day, and another few paragraphs for p.m.'s. The press, as though following Wendell Willkie on a 1940 campaign train, faithfully tried night after night to make stories out of the same, repeated basic speech. And the real campaign went on over their heads, on the packaged, electronic airwaves.

Thus the candidate's major pronouncement on

the crucial issue of the election—the Vietnam War—was made in a prepared statement at the Republican Convention in July in Miami. "We must end the war in Vietnam," he said. But he never was required to explain even broadly how he would do it, and throughout the campaign he was allowed to escape questioning on the subject by any sophisticated, informed panel. Indeed, the Nixon image-makers would not even let the writing reporters sit in the studios where the packaged TV programs were made. "Press Rooms" were set up in the TV studios so that reporters could have the privilege of seeing exactly what any TV set owner could see on his set at home.

The Nixon campaign for the Presidency was another classic case of using the press. He used it by ignoring it, bypassing it. He used it on his own terms, and, of course, he used it effectively, from his point of view. He raised the technique of not answering legitimate questions to an art form.

These illustrations, of course, are only a sampling. J. Edgar Hoover has been spreading his personal philosophy of life and crime through release of FBI uniform crime reports for years. The fine print candidly acknowledges that uniform crime statistics are, in fact, impossible because reporting techniques and customs vary from city to city. Still, Hoover issues press releases splashed liberally with quotations from J. Edgar Hoover, representing a view of the causes of crime straight out of the nineteenth century—and the statistics are faithfully reported month after month in the nation's finest papers. An official-looking press release from the FBI is all the platform required.

Across the ideological fence, meanwhile, black militants have found an infallible formula to gain attention: the stronger the criticism of society, the harsher the judgment, the bigger the threat, the more likely it is to be on the tube. Or in the papers. Stokely Carmichael and Rap Brown became masters of the technique. By using the media carefully to build national images and reputations, they have distorted the image of America's black community, prompting many a member of the white middle class to cower in his suburb waiting for the revolution—while in-depth studies universally indicate that the overwhelming majority of the black community is deeply committed to

the preservation of the established social system.

In fact, in this age of media manipulation, reporters at times seem to beg to be used. The "background" session, in which government officials decline to be identified or quoted directly, continues to thrive, not only in Washington but now in the provinces as well. By the standard Washington rule the reporter is permitted to use information thus imparted "on his own authority." He is permitted, in other words, to report the government line as though it were Gospel without mentioning that it is the government line. There even are regular "background breakfasts," organized like social clubs, which compete for officials' favor. The most successful current group is operated by Washington reporter Godfrey Sperling, Jr., of the *Christian Science Monitor*, who had the wisdom to assemble a blue-ribbon panel of newspapermen when he initiated the enterprise in 1966. It is successful in the sense that top government officials accept invitations to the breakfasts. As a result, Sperling is having trouble restricting membership. At least two other breakfast groups have been formed since, at least partially as competitors.

The breakfasts are a useful way of allowing reporters to get to know officials and to question them at some leisure and in some depth outside the formal confrontation of a press conference. Many reporters who participate have deep-seated reservations about the "background" syndrome, but feel that they must take advantage of the only opportunities they may have to question officials. For the Government, the backgrounder can be an invaluable propaganda tool. Government officials are often anxious to take advantage of the platform. Anonymity, however, rarely seems to breed either courage or candor.

Must the media be used? Are they, like a Greyhound bus, a public carrier that should accept all, equally, who wish to ride? What, if anything, can the media do to avoid being used?

Various newsmen believe that "using" of the media can be reduced, but their approach to achieving this probably would give Spiro Agnew insomnia. For they believe, in effect, that rather than having too many analysts and commentators, the media have too few. Rather than doing too

much analysis, the media do too little. If so, newspapers must hire reporters and writers with the background and brains to qualify as independent analysts in major fields of government. Then if a president stands up and says that it is important to the nation that it fight a war in Asia, the reporter will have the background and training to challenge the president. Hence, the future role of newspapers would be to supply more criticism, examination, and questioning.

"We once did the hard news," says Tom Wicker. "But TV has taken that over. Our job now must be in the area of depth, questioning, and analysis."

If there was a media failure on Vietnam, what exactly was it? Was it a failure to interpret and analyze available material, or was it a failure to discover and report—and possibly dramatize—what was really happening? Joseph Goulden, former Washington bureau chief for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, in a book called *Truth Is the First Casualty*, examines the story of the Gulf of Tonkin incident of 1964, which Lyndon Johnson seized upon to gain a Congressional blank check to wage war in Vietnam. Through personal interviews with participants, Goulden makes a convincing case that the incident was a fraud. One key witness had never talked to a reporter until Goulden traced him; then his story exposed the incident as a sham. What might have happened if reporters had found that witness in 1964?

In the same way, David Kraslow and Stuart H. Loory of the *Los Angeles Times* have exposed Johnson's diplomatic strategy. The two were given eight months' reportorial time, and an unlimited budget, to try to piece together the behind-the-scenes story of Johnson's Vietnam diplomacy. Their series of articles in the *Times* and their book, *The Secret Search for Peace in Vietnam*, leave little doubt that Johnson's strategy was to talk peace and make war. His objective was a military victory, and it was not abandoned until the very end of his administration. Kraslow and Loory, both top reporters, were not able to complete their research and publish it until Spring, 1968—after the Tet Offensive and Clark Clifford had changed the complexion of the war. What might have happened if some other great news

organization had undertaken a mission similar to Kraslow's and Loory's a year earlier?

A "used" press is in many ways a passive and timid press whose staff members take the statements and explanations and rationalizations and handouts and background sessions and passes them along to the reader or the viewer and then go home to the suburbs to watch *Laugh-In*. If the Vietnam War could indeed have been reversed or slowed by the media, it is hard to believe it could have been done without aggressive, challenging, controversial reporting. It certainly could not

"The media must learn to deal with the staged or pseudo-event..."

have been done on the back pages. It would have to have been done at the tops of front pages, with stories for which reporters had excavated facts to show that the Administration was lying. It is hard to believe it could have been done by a press corps that could adopt a phrase like "credibility gap."

If the media are to avoid being used, they must recognize that the most common technique employed by those who would use them, in or out of government, is the staged or pseudo-event—what some have called the "media event." The speech, the announcement, the statement by the Secretary of Defense, the antiwar demonstration, the press conference called by the black militants, the press release from J. Edgar Hoover, even the appearance at breakfast by a Cabinet member—all share one thing in common. All are a way in which a salesman for a point of view may present his case. The problem in this fast-moving society is to put hundreds of these pseudo-events, staged daily, into a context that bears a relationship to their importance.

Here is a prominent way in which the media fail. They continue to be victimized by the old "hard-news" formula in which not enough is said about who is doing the talking—and why. As one

newsman put it, "A Congressman can still get up on the floor of the House and make a cogent argument that we ought to recognize Red China and the wires still put it out with a tone of shock that suggests the man is probably a red. The world has changed, but the hard-news reporters haven't."

No rule of journalism forbids a reporter from attempting to set the scene for what he is reporting. Some newsmen in Washington will identify information as coming from a "backgrounder" in which the source declined to be identified. That helps. But it would also help if stories went deeper in suggesting a President's motivation, or even the possible motivation of the director of the FBI. It would have helped in Chicago had more effort been invested in determining who was whom among potential demonstrators, and who spoke for how many. It would have helped if reporters covering the Nixon campaign had taken time to investigate and explain his image-making techniques, which Joe McGinniss so adroitly exposed in *The Selling of the President*. With more and more pseudo-events becoming legitimate news, the necessity for providing background for an event becomes greater and greater.

It is necessary to recognize, too, that the nature of news—or what is called news—is changing. Because of the infinite complexity of modern society, many things are "news" that can't be learned in police stations: attitudes in the black community or among youth; the influence of the military; the economics of hunger; the adequacy of public education or health care; the will of the people in South Vietnam; the way images are made. All these may bear directly on the lives of readers and, having importance to them, may be "news," though not events.

The news media still must try to hold up a mirror to the world, to reflect it as accurately as possible to readers or viewers. But the picture can hardly be accurate if the media are largely occupied with reflecting the views of pleaders of causes, or dramatizing "happenings," or blandly transmitting the official Government line. The press must not turn itself over to those who would use it. Editors and writers must seek out the questions that require answering and set out to find the answers for themselves.

If, as legend holds, capital press bureaus have their choice of news talent, why have they not employed more blacks?

Washington's white press corps

JULES WITCOVER

The Commission's major concern with the news media is not in riot reporting as such, but in the failure to report adequately on race relations and ghetto problems and to bring more Negroes into journalism. . . . Disorders are only one aspect of the dilemmas and difficulties of race relations in America. In defining, explaining, and reporting this broader, more complex, and ultimately far more fundamental subject, the communications media, ironically, have failed to communicate. They have not communicated to the majority of their audience—which is white—a sense of the degradation, misery, and hopelessness of living in the ghetto. They have not communicated to whites a feeling for the difficulties and frustrations of being a Negro in the United States. . . . If the media are to comprehend and then to project the Negro community, they must have the help of Negroes.

—Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968.

■ In the running battle over equal employment opportunities, much of the bombardment is aimed at the construction trades for a rigid apprenticeship system that serves to bar black labor. In Washington perhaps more than anywhere else, the issue is prominent for two reasons: the federal government is the largest builder, with anti-discrimination regulations that directly prohibit traditional hiring

Jules Witcover regularly writes from Washington for the *Columbia Journalism Review*.

practices, and the city has the largest proportion of black population of any U.S. metropolis—more than two-thirds. Accordingly, when President Nixon in late September established a new commission to deal with “strife and tensions” in the construction industry, it clearly was a racial as well as an economics and labor story. Yet ironically, among the more than 650 out-of-town general readership publications and radio-TV stations and networks with news bureaus in Washington, only six had a black reporter on their staffs to cover that story *if they so chose*.

Whether such a story indeed should be covered by a black reporter is a separate question, to be addressed later. In those relatively few news organizations in Washington that do have black reporters, there is lively debate over what assignments they should and should not be given. Actually, in today's Washington, a reporter can scarcely avoid covering racial stories. They flow from every branch and agency of the Government. And editors have found—not surprisingly—that there are capable and incapable black reporters, and because really good reporters are everywhere at a premium, they tend to be used as reporters, not as black men. Eugene C. Patterson, managing

editor of the *Washington Post*, which has more than a dozen black reporters, says: "I just don't think in black terms anymore. What we look for is professionalism."

Patterson's comment touches on the most common defense by others in Washington news media who have not hired blacks—that there are not enough professionally trained black reporters to go around. The lament, "If I could find one I'd hire him," is as familiar in all-white Washington bureaus as it is in all-white city rooms around the country. And the contention cannot be dismissed out of hand. Only within the past five to ten years has journalism's door opened even a crack for the black apprentice, and too often the crowbar has been a kind of jim-crowbar—a defensive, self-conscious reaction to the black revolt against discriminatory hiring practices. Either that, or a panic reflex by editors caught unprepared to report the full story when summer riots first broke [see "Journalism and Race Relations," Fall, 1968].

To the black audience as well as to the white, what happens in Washington in this period of racial upheaval and misunderstanding is particularly significant. It is not so much a matter of access to otherwise unreachable sources that compels the hiring of black reporters in the Capital; it is the need to have the black perspective in the reporting of national news.

Admittedly, finding qualified blacks is not easy. Before the riots of the 1960s, the black student largely had written off journalism—at least general-circulation journalism—as a promising career field. Those who did break in usually had to demonstrate not only competence but excellence and inordinate perseverance. One of the few over-forty blacks in the Washington press corps recalls how, in his early days, just to stay even with white competitors in covering one racial trial in the Deep South, he had to go to the courthouse a day early, scout a place where he could eat, park his car, and phone his office in an Eastern city. "The next morning," he says, "I got up early again, went to the phone booth, and put an out-of-order sign on it. Then after the morning session, I ran out and called in my story. It worked the first day, but on the second, when I went to the same booth and asked the operator to get me Baltimore, she said

'Ain't you the nigger boy who called yesterday? You just put that phone down.' I protested, but I had to go find another phone." Such stories, of which there are many, help explain why few young blacks looked to journalism.

Today, while employers actively pursue blacks who have any professional news experience, they prefer that recruits get their experience at somebody else's expense. Even where this no longer is true on city staffs, when it comes to staffing Washington bureaus the general attitude is that this assignment above all requires experienced men: that it can't and shouldn't be a training ground for cubs. As a result, those newspapers that have pioneered—the *Washington Post* foremost, but also the *Washington Star*—have been subject to aggressive and sometimes ruthless raiding. The *Star* particularly has been besieged.

Of all the bureaus maintained by general-circulation out-of-town newspapers or newspaper groups in Washington, only two have had a full-time staff reporter who is black. One, the *Charleston, S. C., News and Courier*, about a year ago sent a city staff member, Rudolph Pyatt, to be its No. 2 Washington man, covering not just racial stories but the spectrum of Washington news of special interest to South Carolina readers. The other, the *New York Times*, only last summer hired its first black reporter assigned to Washington—Paul Delaney—from the city staff of the *Washington Star*. Max Frankel, the *Times'* Washington bureau chief, was looking for an experienced urban-affairs reporter for the bureau's new urban "cluster" concept. "The fact that he was black was a plus," Frankel says. "There was some concern that the bureau's report generally lacked the input of a black viewpoint." Frankel also is using the bureau's intern program to train other blacks.

The Washington bureaus of the two major news magazines likewise have turned to outside sources for black reporters. *Time* hired Wallace Terry from the *Post* several years ago, sent him to Vietnam, and currently has granted him a leave for a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard. The bureau now has one black newsman, Paul Hathaway, lured from the *Star* in 1968 for general reporting. The *Newsweek* bureau's one black reporter, Samuel F. Yette, was hired in January, 1968, after free-

lancing and having worked for *Ebony*, the Office of Economic Opportunity, local newspapers, and the Peace Corps.

Though the Washington bureaus of the Associated Press and United Press International at this writing were without a fulltime black reporter, each service has black alumni and is attempting to bring more blacks up through the system. The AP's most promising find, Austin Scott, worked his way to the Washington bureau's special assignments team and now is on a Nieman Fellowship. UPI in late summer lost its only fulltime black reporter, Michael Anders, to the much-raided Washington *Star*, after having trained him successively as a copyboy, dictationist, and radio news writer. Among the major newspaper groups' Washington bureaus—Hearst, Scripps-Howard, Newhouse, Knight, Gannett, and Copley—there is no black reporter.

In radio and TV, the picture is no better. Although they can offer glamour and money, of the three major networks only two have fulltime black correspondents in Washington, Hal Walker at CBS and Len Tucker, a newcomer at NBC. The Westinghouse group has had the only black assigned as a fulltime White House correspondent: Bernard Shaw, now reassigned to urban affairs. Each of Washington's four local TV outlets has at least one black in an on-camera job, and WRC-TV for a time had a black team. TV news directors particularly say they are looking for qualified blacks, but, as Frank Jordan of NBC says, "All the networks in Washington are way past the point where we just hire readers. We need a man who is qualified as a good correspondent, with solid reporting credentials, who also can go on the air—with voice, appearance, and delivery." The combination is a rarity among blacks for the same reason there are not more experienced black newspaper reporters—the early days of closed doors. Jordan's colleagues, John Lynch at ABC and William Small at CBS, also want to hire blacks but have been stymied by TV news' multiple requirements.

The shortage of blacks in Washington is sometimes attributed to a custom of staffing bureaus by promotion from within organizations. Yet dozens of Washington reporters are hired each year in Washington, from rival bureaus or "off the street."

And as Carl Rowan, the only nationally syndicated black columnist working out of Washington, says, "Even though Negroes were cut out of journalism for many years and never could build up the seniority required for assignment to Washington, in the next five years no newspaper will be able to hide behind that explanation." William Raspberry, now a Washington *Post* local columnist, who also is black, agrees. "As long as papers back home have a white-only look at City Hall, I'm not surprised they have a white-only look at the Pentagon."

Besides emphasis on "the tradition of internal staffing" of Washington bureaus, there also is a contention, either spoken or implied, that black reporters—particularly those coming out of exclusively black-readership journalism—lack the competence of whites. Ben Gilbert, who was city editor of the Washington *Post* when it pioneered hiring of blacks in the early 1950s and who now

*"... as much
'deliberate speed'
... as the Deep South..."*

is a member of the editorial page staff, recalls receiving a phone call from a New York *Times* executive a few years ago inquiring how many blacks the *Post* had hired and where it got so many. Gilbert told him the *Post* had twelve, and then inquired in turn how many blacks the *Times* had. "Three," his caller answered, "but we won't lower our standards."

Newspapers which have taken the trouble to train black recruits—or to raid others for the finished product—have learned they need not lower their standards. In fact, white editors who have hired blacks say for the most part that they have found a previously untapped potential for professional newsmen. "We don't feel we're doing anybody any favors," says Patterson at the *Post*. "Pound for pound, they're as good as any reporters anywhere." In many cases, because earlier educational deprivation causes black students to arrive

in city rooms with basic deficiencies, special basic education as well as reportorial training is needed. But the need for qualified blacks, says Managing Editor Charles B. Seib, Jr., of the *Star*, justifies the effort. The *Star* is exploring a special arrangement with a local school to provide such training.

Some older black reporters in Washington, having succeeded before the doors were swung open, themselves express concern that standards are being lowered. Says one: "I see more black incompetence today. It makes it harder for the legitimate fellows who worked their heads off. It's healthy for blacks to be hired as reporters, but you're still black, and people think you got your job just because you're black, and not as a trained reporter. If editors go after a man first because he's black and only second because he's a reporter, they both will have trouble. Whites are incompetent, too, but blacks are so visible in the news business."

Whether incompetent blacks are hired or not, there is general recognition that a moderately experienced black reporter can get a job on the Washington papers—though not in the bureaus—more readily than can a white of equal experience, and probably for more money. The papers, covering a city predominantly black, obviously need them more. "I have no doubts that if I was not black," says one recently hired reporter, "I wouldn't have gotten a job in this town. I didn't have enough experience when I was hired. I know it and so do the white kids on the paper—journalism school graduates with master's degrees who don't have reporting jobs yet."

Editors evaluating black reporters—and the successful reporters themselves looking at recruits—return usually to the word "professionalism" to describe what they seek in blacks or in whites. But the question of what professionalism is, and what it ought to be, reveals very interesting differing attitudes among both white and black newsmen. The differences are most often along generational lines. The older newsmen (among blacks, anybody over thirty or thirty-five who has been in the business six or eight years is "old") are likely to hew fairly closely to the traditional criteria of professionalism: mastery of reportorial skills, emotional detachment from stories covered, close adherence to facts with only carefully disciplined

resort to interpretation and analysis. The younger newsmen, perhaps reflecting the general dissatisfaction of their generation with materialistic excesses and hypocrisies of a world they didn't make, tend to go beyond those boundaries. They often favor reporting that not only tolerates but requires a greater personal involvement and expression of point of view to get at "the truth."

Even most of the older men have discarded the arid concept of "objectivity" that insisted on a mere repetition of what was said and seen, when such repetition failed to provide the perspective

"Dozens of reporters are hired each year 'off the street'..."

that real comprehension required. Good newsmen, old and young, appreciate that the truth often can be many-dimensional. The debate centers on how far a good reporter, considering his personal involvement and commitment, should go in trying to analyze it.

The discussion is particularly germane to hiring and assigning black reporters, and to their concepts of their jobs, for at least two reasons: First, black newsmen more than their white colleagues are personally involved in the foremost domestic problem in the nation—racial inequality and the unrest it generates; second, blacks often are hired, at the outset at least, to report on some aspect of that problem. Should they, in light of their usually intense commitment to the black movement, cover racial stories? And, of equal importance, do they want to?

The very asking of these questions measures the advance of those blacks who have broken into journalism in a relatively few years. When the *Washington Post* in 1952 hired its first black reporter, Simeon Booker (now *Washington* bureau chief of the Johnson Publications and commentator for the Westinghouse radio-TV groups), great care was taken that he be assigned only where his presence would stir no controversy, and his copy

was given special editing treatment to be sure it caused none. Later, when the summer riots of the 1960s caught newspapers without the manpower or pipelines to report from inside the black community, there was neither time nor inclination to debate whether black reporters should be used on controversial and inflammatory stories. That was what they were hired for.

The Washington *Post* pioneered not only in the hiring of blacks but also in the use of bi-racial teams to get both sides of the story, with Terry and Robert Baker, a white reporter, on civil rights stories in the South; and notably with Raspberry (then a city reporter) and one of the paper's senior white reporters, Chalmers Roberts, in the Watts riots. The Watts experience alerted the *Post* and other papers to deficiencies in reporting in and about the black community. By the time Washington itself was torn by a major riot in April, 1968, following Martin Luther King's assassination, both the *Post* and the *Star* were able to put experienced black reporters on the streets. At that time no Washington newspaper bureau could do the same; as a result, their coverage of that riot was in the main undistinguished.

(At the *Post* after the riot, the black reporters checked the paper's coverage and were incensed to find that every byline on page one was that of a

"We have come to a better understanding of the black community..."

white rewrite man. When the riot broke, every black reporter available had been sent out, leaving only whites in the newsroom. Since then, the policy of giving the byline automatically to the rewrite man has changed. Now, in any group-reporting effort the paper runs an accompanying box giving names of reporters who participated.)

Major riots, of course, require the use of all able bodies, and in situations where whites will talk only to white reporters and blacks only to black reporters any discussion of the personal prefer-

ences of white or black newsmen becomes academic. In the absence of that kind of crisis, however, a very serious and sensitive dialogue is occurring among black reporters, and those editors who have hired them, about the proper criteria for employing and assigning blacks. The older black reporters, having made their own way, not surprisingly insist on being recruited and assigned solely on the basis of their reportorial skills. They have built professional records to refute the notion that because they are black they cannot report fairly on the black revolution. Yet many do not want to cover civil rights as a regular beat, and some do not want to cover it at all. Says one veteran:

"Race aside, I like to feel I can cover any beat as well as any other man of any color. I would want to be hired as a newsman, not as a Negro. I got my color free; I spent a lot of money getting my education. I want to feel that if the civil rights problem ended in the morning, I'd still have a job to do. When I come to work I try to leave my personal life, my commitment, at home. And when I leave work, I try to leave my work at the office. On the job, I try to be a mirror. I talk to somebody and he starts talking about niggers. I don't correct him. I take it down. I just want to be sure I spell it right."

Other veterans, while sharing the insistence on being appraised and assigned without regard to race, are drawn to racial stories simply because that is where the action is. "The racial story," says Robert Maynard, the only black reporter on the national staff of the Washington *Post*, "is the best domestic story in this country. Anyone who didn't want to be part of that story—there's something wrong with him, irrespective of his color. Obviously, you don't want to be confined to that. You want to be in on all the good stories."

There was a time, Maynard says, when an editor would not assign him to a racial story precisely because he was black, but the *Post* soon came to realize that this approach was not in the best interest of either the paper or the reporter. Although the *Post* still employs the bi-racial team approach, Maynard says one of the most encouraging developments has been his assignment in the past years to important stories with bi-racial angles to handle —alone. "I don't know whether the editors have

ever stopped to realize it," he says. "The paper's best interest needs to be served. The most important thing is that the story be covered if possible by the man most qualified in any particular area. There's no more reason to be arbitrary about color than about anything else."

Post editor Patterson agrees: "You really don't like to have a black reporter and just have him cover news of the black community. We have come to a greater understanding of the black community. In many cases black reporters can do better there than whites. When those cases come up, we use blacks."

Young black reporters seldom are as reluctant as their older colleagues to cover racial stories. Many of the new recruits, in fact, are so eager to focus on such stories that assignment editors pause. Having emerged from an environment—in the black community or on the college campus—in which the fact of racial injustice has been underscored by protest activity, these recruits often feel a compulsion, as one of their older colleagues puts it, to "bring their commitment to work." Also, some who are assigned to work in the black community are accused of spying or "Tomming" and are under considerable personal and emotional pressure to prove otherwise.

Columnist Rowan observes that while most young black reporters remain basically interested in making the grade as individuals, beyond that they have a "great confusion" over whether to use their role as a reporter to advance the cause. "Most don't have the sophistication yet to separate the two. I tell them, 'Concentrate on being the best damn journalist there is, and your blackness will take care of itself.'" Raspberry, a seven-year man at the *Post* at thirty-four, says the same thing another way: "You don't ever stop being black. If you do, you wipe out 90 per cent of the reasons for your being hired. Papers need that viewpoint. The professional can separate his personal involvement. He can step back and understand what's going on. That doesn't mean he has to eliminate feelings."

One of the young blacks, City Hall reporter Walterene Swanston of the Washington *Star*, acknowledges that she wants to cover racial stories not only because there is where her interest lies,

but also because she believes she can provide a viewpoint the whole community needs for better understanding. Just as the white reporter is a product of his environment and brings his personal experience to whatever reportorial judgments he makes on a story, a black reporter draws from his different but equally relevant background. Being black enabled Mrs. Swanston to receive a tip on last year's student takeover at Washington's Howard University, and to provide the *Star* with inside reporting. Being black gave her entree to the students' meetings, and to events from which

"They're committed to issues of the city, and that's good..."

she concluded—and wrote—that excessive force was being used against them. Being black also led her to challenge the *Star's* traditional policy of identifying victims and suspects of crimes by race, and after circulating a petition among the predominantly white staff, to have the policy modified. "They hired all of me," she says.

Max Robinson, a black television newsman at WTOP-TV in Washington, is another who sees no reason why the black reporter should check his commitment at the door. He contends that most white reporters employed by the white-owned press and TV see, present, and defend only the perspective of the "white establishment," and that it is up to black reporters to look and report from another perspective. Robinson says he does not want to be a civil rights reporter per se. "I'd like to do more coverage of the Pentagon, White House, and Capitol Hill, where black people are subject to repressive policies," he says.

The sense of commitment to cause, and of pursuing it through one's livelihood, of course is not a trait of only young blacks but of many young Americans, white and black. The same forces that impel the young to social action in neighborhood organizations and in colleges have been working on those who enter journalism. At the same time,

the trend in the news media away from the old narrow "objectivity" toward greater interpretation and analysis provides an influential avenue for the young to advance their causes. Older newsmen have approached the transition from straight-facts reporting into interpretative reporting with great wariness and restraint. But among the young products of the McLuhan era the idea of "getting involved" not only is admissible for the good reporter; it is essential if he is to "tell it as it is."

Patterson and Seib, the two Washington managing editors who have had the most young blacks working for them, welcome the transfusion of committed youth—white and black. But both insist that the commitment be pursued in ways that do not run contrary to the reporter's obligations to professionalism. "If I were young and black," says Patterson, "I would have the same hangup. But it's a factor that creates a strain for the reporter, not the paper. We have editors and deskmen to protect the paper. The reporter has to measure up if he wants to stay. But instead of censuring these young people for their commitment, I admire them for it. These gung-ho types, with highly developed social consciousness, are a valuable addition to us. The challenge to them is to elevate an undisciplined enthusiasm. If we can put the harness on them, they become first-rate reporters with a lot of drive."

Seib agrees. "These young reporters' forcing us to change our attitudes is a healthy thing. All young reporters have this problem of involvement. They're committed to the issues of the central city, and that's good for us and the city."

The *Post*, *Star*, and *News* all employ copyboys and dictationists in the hope of advancing them; UPI has an intern supported by a Ford Foundation grant; the Washington Journalism Center, also on a Ford Foundation grant, recruits and trains up to twenty blacks a year (but most return home and work). Yet all this represents only a modest effort. Meanwhile, the highest-ranking editorial job held by a black on the Washington newspapers is that of assistant city editor (Warren Howard, on the *Star*) and the *Post*'s one black foreign correspondent, Jesse Lewis, who speaks Arabic, has been shipped off to head the paper's new Middle East bureau in Beirut. All in all, fifteen years after the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decision requiring school desegregation "with all deliberate speed," one must conclude that the nation's news media have demonstrated as much deliberate speed in bringing integration to Washington journalism as has the Deep South in complying with that historic Court decree—an order that has been the subject of innumerable editorials about foot-dragging in the drive for racial equality.

Woman in the News. "Salty language" by Mrs. Helen Delich Bentley, referred to in headline and lead of New York *Times* September 13, quickly became less consequential as one read further into the story of the radio cut-off. However, *Editor & Publisher* on September 20 repeated the story treatment, borrowing heavily from *Times* quotations. If anyone noticed the end of a *Times* story on page 93 on September 17, the balloon was almost totally deflated, and Mrs. Bentley—by then already "typed" by earlier large headline displays—with justification suggested she had been made a "scapegoat." Having created this image, will the media now perpetuate it in future references?

Icebreaker's Newsmen Stilled Because of Woman's Expletive

Special to The New York Times
WASHINGTON, Sept. 12 — Salty language in a radio-telephone call from Mrs. Helen Delich Bentley, President Nixon's chairman-designate of the Federal Maritime Commission, has prompted cancellation of voice transmission privileges for her fellow journalists aboard the icebreaker S. S. Manhattan.

Mrs. Bentley, covering the voyage as maritime editor of The Baltimore Sun pending Senate confirmation of her appointment, said: "I just used a common Anglo-Saxon expletive to express my impatience with a resolute man, and I and he."



!#&...press loses voice on ice floe

Helen Delich Bentley, who
ave the waterfront for

Passage.
The words she used over a radio telephone got her cut off the air and resulted in cancellation of voice transmission privileges for her fellow journalists.

Mrs. Bentley claimed she used "a common Anglo-Saxon expletive" to express her impatience in trying to get through to a

He expressed the company's regret at the public attention to "Mrs. Bentley's lapse," as well as its "great respect for her as a journalist" and its confidence that "she will prove to be an able head of the Federal Maritime Commission."

She is awaiting Senate confirmation of her nomination by President Nixon. The Baltimore Sun said yesterday that Mrs. Bentley had advised them that similar "slips" into forecable language in live voicecasts had been made by male reporters and by Mr. Haas himself. Mrs. Bentley contended that she was made a "scapegoat" as the only

Latin America: the making of an 'uncontinent'

GEORGIE ANNE GEYER

Like Orwell's "unpersons," whole continents can be deleted from public consciousness; but in this practice are the seeds of more crises.

■ She is such a beautiful place, Latin America, filled with curious Indians and guerrillas and perversely charming people. Why should everyone spurn the lady? Yet today, as always, one hears the same sad refrain of James Reston's that "Americans will do anything for Latin America except read about it."

Americans—particularly editors—undergo spurts of conscience about Latin America. They awake one morning with a headache after a night of violence in Brazil or an ambassador kidnapped and decide they have to "do something" about it all. Blessedly, by the next nightfall these extraordinary feelings have passed and we are back to where we were. For though every American president feels called upon to repeat that Latin America is the most important part of the world to us, everybody knows he doesn't mean it. And while every Latin revolutionary feels impelled to threaten "new Vietnams" in Latin America, everybody knows he is not going to be able to carry it through.

For a while after the arrival of Fidel Castro and the Alliance for Progress, there was a generous

expansion of interest in the area, and a number of aggressive reporters went there to find "their Vietnam." They went repeating over and over again, like a catechism, that after all that is where the largest percentage of our investment is and it is all right there within missile distance over our backyard fence. Today all this is past. Again, newspapers are cutting back on men and coverage; so is TV. The State Department information department, which monitors all Latin coverage, reports far less coverage than in previous years. Indeed, in their clipping work early in August they found so little Latin news in American papers that for a few days they could barely put out their daily review of clippings.

There are, however, several papers which believe the opposite: that the story in Latin America is rapidly accelerating and will do so even more in the next few years as everyone—editors and readers alike—become increasingly disabused with Vietnam and Asia. These include the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Chicago Daily News*. But these more optimistic appraisals seem based more on a judgment of what the Latin story will be than on what it is now.

The major "problem" with Latin news is that it is not at any one moment (except for Cuba,

Georgie Anne Geyer, correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News*, is the author of the forthcoming book *The New Latins* (Doubleday).

guerrillas, and revolutions) dramatic and violent enough to stand up against the first-rate threats we have been getting from Vietnam, the Middle East, and the Sino-Soviet border. But the problem is more complex than that. For it is not that Americans are not interested in Latin America; the New World to the South has always held a certain sirenish fascination for North Americans bored with their ordered and reasoned existence. It was to the South that the North American went—to explore, to dance, to exercise his manliness.

The problem, instead, is that American journalists have tended to write in a manner that makes Latin America a singularly obscure area politically, socially, and psychologically. In a very real way, it is harder to explain Latin America to an American public than it is to explain Asia or Africa or Easter Island. Latin America is so apparently similar—it has the same superficially Western European forms in politics, the family, the home. Yet when a reporter publishes a “straight” story, without doing at the same time a sensitive interpretive piece, it makes little sense to an American reader.

The terms, the forms, the names of political parties—all are similar to the North American. But they all actually mean something totally different. The terms “liberal, conservative, Marxist,” etc., are prime examples. Thus, one may become confused over straight political stories (which is all that too many correspondents have done for years) about the MNR beating the Bolivian Falange (no relation to the Spanish Falange); or the Chilean Socialist Party (no relation to socialism but rather to Castroism) beating the Christian Democrats (who are much different from the European Christian Democrats and who began as the Chilean Falange but with no relation to the Spanish party); or a hundred other examples. All these subjects bear little relation to reality unless all are carefully explained. By then the reader is asleep.

The confusion arises because most American correspondents cover Latin America like City Hall. Few have much training in the area before they come, although a good number draw intelligently on scholarship in the area and have themselves become experts in the area. Most learn on the spot—Latin America always has been considered such

a third-rate beat for correspondents; it wasn't that hard an area to work into. Perhaps most serious, few have shown a great deal of initiative—outside of crises like the Dominican revolt, when a Pulitzer or two should certainly have gone to Dominican reporting. Otherwise, few leave the capital cities to go out to the jungles, the Mato Grosso, the guerrillas, the savage tribes, the Indian land invasions in the Andes. (Although a large percentage of American correspondents are based in Rio de Janeiro—and cover only Brazil—only rarely is there a story about the massive and magnificently interesting and important interior.)

There is also the question of whether to cover breaking news or write the interpretive article. Today there is a tendency to return to breaking news—even “specials” tend to be competing with the wire services again. But the fact remains that

*“American journalists
have tended to write in
a manner that makes
Latin America obscure...”*

most breaking news in Latin America is of little real significance. This is because in this area the forms—elections, the drawing up of constitutions, family life, the words used in political doctrine—are highly observed and cherished but often do not mirror the substantive life of the society. Elections in Paraguay, for instance, mean nothing—unless something outside the process occurs. The real “news” is often (not always) somewhere other than in the formal elections.

What is important in the area are trends—the changes in the Catholic Church, the new-style Third-World Latin Marxists, the strange activist-level Christian-Marxist dialogue, the constantly changing syndrome of complexes Latin America has about the United States (correspondents also should be psychiatrists), the change in the Latin militaries from a personalistic gang of *caudillos* serving the oligarchies to an intensely nationalistic group of social reformers who say they want to

bring to life the marginal, forgotten men. The reading public seems to like trend-reporting, if only because it helps them make some sense of the news. Ironically, there is less and less of this.

For those journalists who try to get stories out on deadline there is the added curiosity, in exotic parts of the world like Central America, of trying to work through government-controlled cable offices. This happens in many countries, of course, but here it is spiced by the peculiar comical obscurity of the Latins.

There were those, in countries like Guatemala and Salvador, who used to criticize Tropical Radio because it was run by United Fruit. Now that it is run by the Government, they wish United Fruit were back. For instance, during the Guatemalan elections of 1966, when there was a serious guerrilla threat, the Government censors blithely deleted everything they disliked. I, among many others, complained bitterly one day to the cable office chief about this, and he took on a very sober and serious look. "It's the operators," he said. "They are all Guatemalans and nationalists—they cannot stand anyone criticizing their country." He threw his hands up in a smart gesture of impotence. "I cannot control them."

But then the Guatemalans, like many Latins, have always had a curious way of ingratiating themselves with foreign journalists. Just before those elections, they invited everybody to a cocktail party in the military casino. While the Army's No. 1 marimba band played with abandon, the information chief used the occasion to castigate the assembled journalists, who had only come for a free drink. "In particular," he said, "we cannot tolerate cables such as went out today saying that the Government is about to fall to a coup." Then he looked sternly about him and asked, "May I now ask where is Mr. Perez, who sent that cable?"

CBS' Dick Perez reddened noticeably. "But you didn't understand," he said helplessly. "That was a personal service message to my office. What I said was 'The plot is thickening. . . .'"

There are other disadvantages that editors do not always consider when assigning someone to Latin America. Bolivia, for instance, is so high—La Paz is 12,000 feet, the highest capital in the world—that correspondents regularly lose their

memories temporarily and sit around with stunned, impotent looks. Latin presidents are often proudly recalcitrant about being interviewed and insist that the correspondent first submit a list of questions. One correspondent did this, hesitantly, for Paraguay's President Alfredo Stroessner. One of the questions was: "Is Communism a threat to Paraguay?" The President must have written the answers himself, for the reply came back: "No, Paraguay is a threat to Communism."

There is also, particularly for editors, the problem of trying to cover Communist Cuba, which bounces correspondents in and out at whim. Just about every responsible correspondent for major media representatives is now blackballed in Cuba. Indeed, at the revolution's tenth anniversary in January, 1969, only New Leftist "journalists," in particular from the publication *Rat*, were permitted. The men from *Rat*, long-haired and in hippie garb, stunned some prime East European Communist journalists with their style and with the pornography in the magazine. Still, the *Rat* men this year are American journalism's main contact with Castro's Cuba.

If you look at Latin America over the past ten years you see, first, following Castro and the Alliance, increased coverage. But today the same media

"No question, the lady is growing sexier, if only because other areas are growing so boring..."

which then were adding people are cutting back. CBS has Bert Quint in Mexico, but he covers most of the rest of the world as well. NBC is down to one man, Tom Streithorst in Mexico, and ABC has no one fulltime. Copley, which used to have a special interest in Latin America, has discontinued almost all its bureaus. The New York *Times* has four men (Malcolm Browne, Juan de Onis, Joseph Novitski, and Hyman Maidenbergl), after being down to three, but it has cut loose some stringers.

The Washington *Post* continues with one corre-

spondent, John Goshgo, as does the *Chicago Tribune*, with Barry Bishop. The *Los Angeles Times* has three men, as before (David Belknap, Francis Kent, and a new man to be assigned to Rio); the *Baltimore Sun* has Robert Erlandson; the *Christian Science Monitor*, James Nelson Goodsell; the *Miami Herald*, Don Bohning and William Montalbano, both working out of Miami; the *Washington Star* sends Jeremiah O'Leary on trips; the *Chicago Daily News* sends me. *Time* has consolidated its offices in Rio, where *Newsweek* also has one man, Barry Kramer; and *U.S. News & World Report* has cut down from two bureaus to one, headed by Joseph Benham in Rio. AP and UP continue with bureaus in almost every major city, but they acknowledge that news is hard to sell.

"It has so much to compete with now," says one executive. "It's a shame Latin news doesn't get more use in the U.S., but it has to be judged on the basis of other areas' news. The same thing

*"What is important
are trends... in the
military... mass move-
ments... the Church..."*

could be said of Canadian news." If anyone doubted the low state of Latin American coverage, an editor's comparing it with Canadian news should convince him!

At one point in the last year, Sol Linowitz, former Ambassador to the OAS, became so discouraged over the amount of Latin coverage in the American press that he planned to campaign among publishers for more. He left government then, however. It is significant that Governor Nelson Rockefeller frankly stated last Spring that his Latin American trip was aimed more at the United States—at galvanizing interest and public opinion here—than it was at Latin America itself.

Despite this real or assumed lack of interest among Americans, most of the major papers feel compelled to report some Latin news with at least some regularity. The most complete day-to-day

coverage is furnished by the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*, with their complements of staff members, and the *Miami Herald*, which generously uses many stories in addition to those of its own men. But the *New York Times*, considering its resources, is unaccountably behind on reporting trends and on unearthing exclusive stories. Over the years, this has been accomplished better by the *Washington Post*, the *Chicago Daily News*, the *Miami Herald*, and other papers with more aggressive outlooks and staffs.

Within itself, the Latin press corps has been divided politically much as has the Vietnam press corps: liberal vs. conservative; dove vs. hawk. Or, in Spanish, *paloma* versus *halcon*. This division has often proved more serious than elsewhere because, as in much of the underdeveloped world, it is easy for an enterprising and not-too-careful journalist to beguile his way into political participation instead of observation, particularly in a never-never land like the Caribbean. This was especially true during the Dominican revolution in 1965, when nightly the two groups literally scowled and shouted each other down from opposite sides of the bar at Santo Domingo's Hotel Embajador. It was the liberals against the military-brings-stability people; in this case, the Juan Bosch constitutionalists versus the supporters of the Dominican military.

The *Chicago Tribune's* late conservative Jules DuBois, who had been badly burned by his early and effusive support of Fidel Castro, was the first to land in Santo Domingo—because he was so close to the Dominican general, Elias Wessin y Wessin, that he landed in Wessin's helicopter. Later the liberal press corps found its home—in the rebel-held old sector of the city. That is the way it went for months.

The issues then were fairly simple: Either you supported the military and thought it brought order and progress, or you thought the military was what halted democratic development in Latin America and led to guerrillas and disintegration. But again indicative of how complicated Latin American news is, this dichotomy already is obsolete. The militaries have changed, and the younger officers are social reformers and anti-oligarch and class-haters in a new style. Yet little of this gets

into the American papers—we still see the old military style expressed in the American press (and in the American Congress), even though the “Nasseristic” trend has come to fruition in Peru and will probably come in Brazil and Panama and elsewhere. What does get into the press, however, is a story like Ché Guevara’s—that and anything to do with violence and threats and “new Vietnams.” (Even the term “new Vietnams” delineates the chasm, for it is as though Latin America can only be important or understood if other terms are applied to it.)

Indeed, one of the more revealing stories about the ways of Latin coverage revolves around the demise of Ché in the Bolivian hills that fall of 1967. Into the eastern mountains of the Andes

*“There is a
distinct possibility that
Latin American coverage
will prosper...”*

poured journalists of every political color and intention. Once Ché was killed, they all wanted his diary, which the Bolivian military command clutched to its breast like a bag of gold dust. Juan de Onis of the New York *Times* and Andrew St. George and Donald Schanche representing a Magnum consortium were there vying for the diary. The generals were allowing de Onis and St. George to read the pages while locked in the army vault. But neither was to use any of his notes until the diary had actually been sold to them. Each also signed an informal agreement that none of the three would publish before the others, before the generals had the money in hand. Meantime, the French writer-adventuress, Michelle Ray, who had been captured by the Vietcong, arrived to bid (it turned out falsely) for the diary in order to keep it from “imperialist” hands. She got much information, however.

Then the first week in January, 1968, the *Times* suddenly published a box advertising the first of de Onis’ series on Ché, to begin the next day. St. George happened to be in New York, and came to

a quick boil. Still negotiating for the diary, he felt strongly the *Times* was abusing the tripartite agreement to which he was a party. On calling the *Times*, he was told, “What the *Times* advertises, the *Times* prints.” But when he eventually contacted Clifton Daniel and showed the signed agreement, there were second thoughts. Juan de Onis, then in Havana, of course could not, according to those intimately involved in the situation, discuss the sensitive issue on the Cuban telephone. The upshot was that the *Times* withdrew the stories.

As it happened, after many more months of negotiating, the ubiquitous Michelle Ray printed part of the information in *Ramparts*. Then the Bolivian Minister of the Interior, Antonio Arguedas, who had been working part time for the CIA, became angered at his employers and sent the diary to Fidel Castro, who jubilantly published it.

That is the comic-tragic way journalism goes in Latin America. But that is not the way it *has* to go. Looking to the future, there is the distinct possibility that Latin American coverage will prosper. No question, the lady is growing sexier again, if only because other parts of the world are growing so boring.

But what should be covered? And will it be covered? The change from countryside to urban guerrilla warfare should be covered (Brazilian Ambassador C. Burke Elbrick’s kidnapping marked the debut of this change. The dramatic shift in the Latin military should be probed. So should the question of whether Chilean-style reformist democracy can transform an underdeveloped country. Also, the evolving new relationships with the United States; the passionate new economic nationalism that is leading to one nationalization after another; the shifts in relations between Cuba and Soviet Union; the extraordinary changes in personality and outlook emerging from sheer mass movements of Latins from the country to the city. And more.

For the fact is that Latin America is the one part of the underdeveloped world that is Western—and so it offers special insights into underdevelopment, into our relationships to it. It offers special insights into itself. Besides, it is a beautiful place. And, after all, it is there.

Departures

Watching the "Sun" set

It was a morning newspaper in a market dominated by "Newsday," an afternoon newspaper in tabloid size. . . .

—Robert Williams,
Former Assistant Managing Editor,
Suffolk Sun (in the *Washington Post*)

■ A newspaper died last October 17, much the way a branch office of Procter & Gamble would "phase out." The death of the *Suffolk Sun* typified its life, and a major aspect of its fatal illness.

The plant stood in an industrial park, amid electronics and plastics factories and sterile blocks of manicured lawn. A reporter arrived there at 1 p.m. A half-hour before, his editor had received word that AP was moving a story about a meeting of the board of Cowles Communications, Inc., in Manhattan. The odds were "999 out of a 1,000" that the paper would be closed. But, the editor understood, the announcement wouldn't come until 4 p.m.—after the stock market had closed for the day.

The exterior of the plant was indistinguishable from the plastics factory next door. The reporter entered the pastel lobby and glanced at the series of "color-coded" files of desks on the ultra-neat working floor.

He sat in a Holiday Inn-style chair and took notes from a diagram of Cowles Communications, Inc., properties hanging overhead. Three other newspapers, he wrote; *Look*; *Family Circle*; radio and TV stations, etc.

To pass time the reporter thumbed through the day's *Sun*. There was a page one "focus" story explaining that, despite a fatal school bus accident the day before, school buses were really safe. There was a follow-up to the reporter's own story from the previous day that undercover detectives allegedly had infiltrated a Moratorium Day rally and led protesters in an attempt to take over a government building. If there was color missing

in the stories, there was plenty in the paper; real color—on the logo, on the women's page, even the daily comics.

Every once in a while an employee left his pastel desk and whispered to other employees at their desks: "Something big's going on." "Did you hear anything?"

A few minutes before 4 p.m., now with about forty people quietly working on the floor, men from each color-coded section were heading for the executive offices. Shortly after 4 they returned, ashen-faced, with three-page mimeographed letters to distribute. More complexions turned pale. It was The Announcement.

A dapper junior editor distributed press releases to the reporters. "We concluded the newspaper could not be operated profitably for several years and would require considerable amounts of additional working capital," said the release, quoting Gardner Cowles, chairman of the board of Cowles Communications, Inc. It added: "High interest rates and a somewhat uncertain economic outlook for the immediate future" led the firm "to feel it would not be in the best interest of the stockholders of Cowles Communications to make additional outlays." At a press conference, bespectacled young Courtney Anderson, the editor, spoke about earlier criticism.

"It was not mismanagement," he said in his modernistic office. "And, in my opinion and the opinion of 73,000 people who bought it, it was not a country newspaper." Referring to the press release, he and young Cowles reiterated that despite increases in advertising and circulation, the magnitude of investment required to put the paper in the black remained formidable.

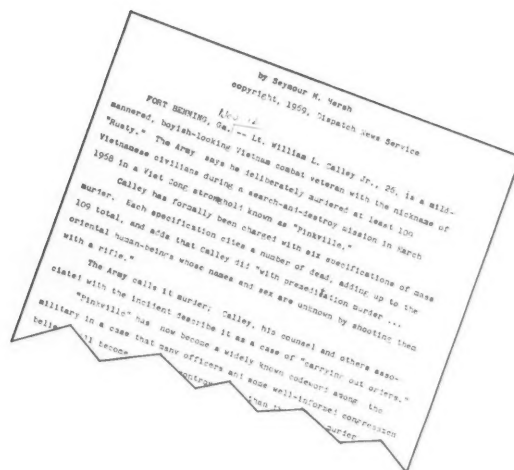
So the *Sun* died. Not in the usual way, with a red-eyed editor calling everybody together in the cityroom. And, not for the usual reasons—excessive union demands, plummeting circulation and advertising. It was done in the style of an executive happening at IBM. Fittingly, a corporate press release and the admonishment to "Please stay off the floor" were the obituary for the failure of a great corporate experiment in journalism.

KARL GROSSMAN

Karl Grossman is a reporter for ABC News Service writing for the *Long Island Press*.

Notes on the art

The story everyone ignored.



■ I was asked to write this article—to tell editors how they missed one of the biggest stories of the year—by an associate editor of one of the biggest newspapers in America, one of the newspapers that was very slow to fully realize the significance of the alleged massacre at Songmy. That irony, in itself, is important to me—for it convinces me that editorship, like democracy, is not dead . . . yet.

The fact that some thirty newspapers in this country, Canada, and abroad did publish my first and subsequent Dispatch News Service stories on Songmy is further proof that the nations' press is not as gutless as all that. I honestly believe that a major problem in newspapers today is not censorship on the part of editors and publishers, but something more odious: self-censorship by the reporters.

There is no doubt that many reporters had heard of the Pinkville incident (at least many have told me so). In talking to some Pentagon officials before I wrote my first story (they talked then), I was told by one general officer: "Pinkville had been

a word among GIs for a year. I'll never cease to be amazed that it hasn't been written about before." Another general officer who was attached to headquarters in Saigon in 1968 said he had first heard talk of Pinkville soon after it happened. Of course, an outsider can also be amazed that generals would hear of such incidents and not demand an investigation, but the notion that *those* men thought that the press had somehow fallen on the job is, well, significant.

As everyone knows, the first mention of the incident was provided by the public information officer at Fort Benning, Ga., who released a brief item September 6 announcing that Lt. William L. Calley, Jr., had been charged with murder in the deaths "of an unspecified number of civilians in Vietnam."

The AP man in the area promptly put in a query; when the Pentagon did not gush forth with all of the details, that was that. No other questions were officially asked of the Pentagon about the Calley story until I offered some carefully hedged queries around October 23.

The Washington Post queried the Pentagon about Calley on November 6; by that time I had arranged a number of interviews—with Calley, among others—and was well on the way. The New York Times also began asking some questions shortly before the first story broke early November 12 for the next morning's papers.

The initial Pentagon dispatch was put on the wire by the AP and appeared Saturday morning in many major newspapers in the country, including the Washington Post, the New York Times, and Los Angeles Times. It would be wonderful to say I noticed it immediately, saw its significance, and dashed out with pencil and pad in hand. Of course not. I was tipped around October 20 by a source with Pentagon connections. My source simply told me that the military was planning to court-martial an officer at Fort Benning, Ga., for the murder of about seventy-five Vietnamese civilians.

What made me drop everything (I was then finishing *The Ultimate Corporation*, a book on the Penta-

gon for Random House) and begin pursuing the story? For one thing, my source was good—but certainly no better than others who must have told newsmen about the incident in the twenty months since it took place. Another, more important reason, I think, was my experiences with chemical and biological warfare (CBW). I had written a book on CBW (*Chemical and Biological Warfare: America's Hidden Arsenal*, Bobbs-Merrill) that was published in mid-1968 but somehow failed to make much of a mark at first. The public and the press seemingly did not want to believe that the United States was stockpiling nerve gas at Army commands overseas, nor did they want to believe that American military men would be capable of shipping trainloads of nerve gas through the American countryside without telling anyone. My book prompted very little investigative reporting.

So, I believed the story about Pinkville. And I also knew—or thought I knew—that newspapers would probably be the last to believe it. Thus I began my searches with an eye on *Look* and *Life* magazines. I won't tell who gave me leads, but suffice to say that I managed to find out who Calley was, and where his lawyer was located. I decided that the telephone was a bad interviewing instrument on the Pinkville story, and therefore interviewed every important witness or near-witness in person. I applied for and received a limited travel grant (about \$2,000 en toto) from the Philip Stern Fund for Investigative Journalism in Washington, and began flying around to locate witnesses. (In all, I traveled more than 30,000 miles via air.)

By early November I had a pretty good picture of what had happened, at least solid enough so I could

write. I knew Calley had been charged with 109 deaths and I had the precise wording from the charge sheets. I contacted *Life*; they said they weren't interested (little did I know that they had turned down Ronald Ridenhour, the twenty-three-year-old California college student whose letters first prompted the Army to study the incident). Then I went to *Look*. A senior editor there was very interested; I wrote a sketchy, but explosive, memo on what I had. They, too, decided to pass—I think, charitably, because of their four- to six-week lead time.

I really didn't know where to turn, so I simply kept doing research. David Obst, general manager of *Dispatch* and a Washington neighbor and fellow touch football player, had learned from me about Pinkville and was insistent on handling it. I had written a few Sunday pieces for his news service and been moderately successful; as many as six or eight responsible newspapers (including the *Baltimore Sun*) had published one or more of my earlier works. So in the end, I turned to *Dispatch* and committed myself to its syndication.

Why? I was convinced that if I walked into a major newspaper and laid out my story, the editors, to verify my information, would have to repeat the painstaking interview-and-more-interview process I had gone through, and then write their own story. I could respect this, but I simply wanted my story for myself. And I wanted it to be credible, which ruled out smaller magazines. This wasn't an article for a journal of opinion, like the *New Republic*, or *National Review*, for that matter—it was hard news that should be written as such.

That left Obst and *Dispatch*. Amazingly, as is well known, it

worked. Of about fifty newspapers contacted, thirty-two or so eventually ran my first story citing the charges against Calley. This was not done on a whim; the papers carefully checked me and as many of the facts as possible. That was to the newspaper world's credit.

What happened after the first story is not. Only the *New York Times*, which had its own story, chose to follow up independently on the story, by sending Henry Kamm from its Saigon bureau to the Pinkville area to interview survivors (ABC-TV and *Newsweek* also went along). The *Times* decided to treat Pinkville as a major story and do its own reporting from the outset. Other papers avoided any hint of investigatory research and it was left to me to seek out Ridenhour (who, after my first story, had told newspapers about his role) and to interview him in California. Although he had first revealed his part in the story Friday, November 14, and I did not see him until the following Monday afternoon, amazingly I was the first reporter to personally interview him. The *New York Times* and AP had talked briefly to him by telephone, but the *Los Angeles Times*—barely thirty miles away in downtown Los Angeles—did not send a reporter. And none of the papers realized how important Ridenhour was—he had a list of eyewitnesses, many of whom were out of the service and willing to talk.

Ridenhour gave me the names and addresses of some of the eyewitnesses he had spoken to about Pinkville (he did not actually participate in the incident), and off I went. After personal interviews in Utah, Washington, and New Jersey—conducted within twenty-four hours—my subsequent story, for newspapers of November 20, was

well received by the nation's press. After that second story, newspapers generally were still reluctant to comment editorially on Pinkville (with the *New York Times* and *Chicago Sun-Times* being notable exceptions), although they were playing the story big. It all had suddenly become much more credible when the Army announced in late November that Calley had indeed been charged with the murder of 109 Vietnamese civilians.

The last newspapers vestiges of resistance disappeared when Paul Meadlo of Terre Haute, Ind., submitted to a *Dispatch* interview and told how he had calmly executed, under orders, dozens of Vietnamese civilians. *Dispatch* provided information on Meadlo to CBS-TV, which ran a long interview on the Walter Cronkite show. It was a cash deal for *Dispatch*, with Meadlo, who had been fully informed of the possible dangers to him and his rights in the matter, not being paid one cent; but even more important

was the fact that television was needed—that somehow just relying on newspapers to sear the conscience of America hadn't been working, or had been working too slowly. It took three newspaper stories and one television interview to make Pinkville a national issue; it shouldn't have.

After Meadlo came a flurry of newspaper stories quoting former members of Calley's platoon and his company. The newspaper industry, in one of those collective changes of mind that can only be found in the business, decided each man's testimony was important enough to play all over the front pages. The indiscriminate use of eyewitness statements was amazing to me; I had carefully attempted to get some kind of "feel" from each of my interviewees before quoting them. GIs are notorious liars (that point is based on a personal recollection), particularly when talking about their combat days. I think some of those who came forward

did not tell all the truth.

This, of course, leads right into the issue of pre-trial publicity; a major dilemma facing newspapers today. I was impressed by how important this issue was for some newspapers when they were deciding whether or not to run my first few *Dispatch* stories; and then surprised at how quickly the same newspapers forgot about such rights and began splashing stories across their newspaper once Pinkville became a big issue. *Dispatch* handled the pre-trial publicity question by retaining a prominent Washington law firm and relying on it for advice. The advice generally was that the public's right to know far outweighed any disadvantages to some involved individuals. Even if a court-martial became an impossibility and some men had to be turned free, this seemed preferable to not having as full and as responsible a debate as possible—and "responsible" to me simply meant when I quoted a source I firmly be-



First publication of Mylai photos came in the November 20 *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, which later reported many readers who phoned within twenty-four hours disapproved of publication of the photos.

lieved him to be telling the truth; it was not always a question of just quoting someone accurately.

What made some responsible and careful newspapers publish my stories and others, equally as responsible and careful, not publish them? I think part of the answer is instinct, the instinct many reporters and editors feel for a story or a source. There are many blind sources one can trust, even over a telephone, while others need careful checking.

One newspaper with which I became involved was the *Washington Post*. I met with top editors of the paper early on the morning of November 12, when *Dispatch* broke the story. The meeting was chaired by Ben Bradlee, the *Post*'s executive editor. My story was passed around, read by all, and I answered some direct questions on the legal aspects of the charges against Calley. No one asked what seemed to me to be the obvious question: "Is this true?" After I left, I learned later, Bradlee handled that aspect by telling his staff, "This smells right." His instinct was working, at least that morning.

Nevertheless, I knew things had changed for most of the nation's press after the Meadlo interview; at least six friends in the Washington newspaper corps called me at home over the next few evenings seeking tips on where to go next or leads on involved GIs or officers who might be living in their local areas.

When the nation's newspapers begin wanting their hometown mass murderer, things are well in hand.

SEYMOUR M. HERSH

Mr. Hersh, who formerly covered the Pentagon for AP, is a reporter for *Dispatch News Service* in Washington. This article is adapted, with permission, from a report in the *Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors*.

Color and the comics

■ Leaf through the daily newspaper looking for black people. You'll probably find some in the news columns, maybe even on page one. But chances are you won't find a black face in the comics. Of more than 175 comic strips with wide syndication, only four feature blacks with any regularity. They are *Dateline: Danger*, *Wee Pals*, *Mandrake the Magician*, and *The Phantom*. Perhaps five others show blacks occasionally and then only in incidental roles.

Various reasons are advanced for this "comic strip apartheid." Synthesized from conversations with comic art directors, the explanations go something like this: "We'd like to have some black characters because the times have changed. But we can't make them major characters in our existing strips because our readers might think it manipulative. We can't feature them in story segments because they'd eventually disappear and that would be tokenism. So, we'll create a new strip that's integrated from the beginning. It can't be a humor strip, because jokes directed at the black character might be interpreted as racist. So it will be an adventure strip. But we can't have the character do anything that might offend Southerners, because then we couldn't sell the strip in the South."

Fear of offending anyone is the driving emotion at the syndicates. Sylvan Byck, comics editor at King Features, puts it this way: "We have tried to keep away from race and ethnic humor because you don't know if you'll offend anybody. It's not just blacks, but other ethnic

groups like Jews and Italians. If you make the villain in an adventure strip an Italian or a Mexican, you're in trouble. So we try to keep our villains out-and-out WASP." Byck could have said the same thing about the vast majority of comic heroes.

During the so-called "Golden Age" of comics, black characters appeared in a number of strips. There was Smokey, Joe Palooka's faithful retainer; Asbestos, the race track buff in *Joe and Asbestos*; and Hambone, the homespun philosopher in *Hambone's Meditations*. One thing these and other black characters had in common was stereotype. Usually they had big white lips on solid black faces with big white eyes. Frequently black characters were cannibals. They spoke like this:

Sis Mandy's gal bin 'way to collidge, an' cain' nobody now understan' whut she talkin' 'bout!

(*Hambone's Meditations*, by Cal and J. P. Alley, Jr.)

MOON: Oh, well, I saved myself 25 bucks!

NEGRO: Less \$10 foh de doctah —pretty good business, ah'd say, boss.

(*Moon Mullins*, by Frank Willard)

When blacks protested against the stereotyped portrayal, the usual response of a syndicate was to eliminate the Negro character altogether. On the other hand, fear of offending the South prevented the syndicates from using blacks in less distorted roles. And there the situation rested until recently.

There were exceptions. In 1963, after the Cleveland chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality protested Asbestos' "minstrel" type character, Ken Kling changed him overnight. He became "almost handsome" and spoke like a college

professor. In 1961, Leonard Starr featured a black music director in his popular show business strip *On Stage*. The strip excited the curiosity of a number of readers, who wrote to ask if the character was really a Negro. He was.

A number of elements have contributed to new interest in integrated comic strips. One of the most important, although editors might be reluctant to admit it, was the long hot summers. Morrie Turner, creator of *Wee Pals*, said many newspapers contracted for his strip in the wake of the Martin Luther King assassination. Another factor is that integrated strips apparently are now salable. "There's a general feeling that perhaps now the public has come to a point where you can show a black character and a white character within the same frame of a comic strip without insulting anyone," says William Sexton, editor of Publishers-Hall Syndicate. "Years ago, I guess this wasn't true."

Despite this feeling, the syndicates have been cautious. There is a feeling that going too far too fast might create a glut on the market, somewhat analogous to the "white backlash." Said King Features' Byck: "We would like to have a new strip with black characters, but we would like to have one which is a good strip, marketable. We have been working with someone on such a strip, but we don't know yet if it is going to be something that will sell."

In a sense, a strip is like a Broadway play; many scripts are submitted, but few are produced. The average syndicate looks at nearly 1,000 new strips a year, and may decide to buy only one or two. It is not surprising, then, that so far only one strip has been created from scratch as a racially integrated adventure story. It is *Dateline*:

Danger by John Saunders and Al McWilliams and syndicated by Publishers-Hall. Both Saunders and McWilliams are white.

"The credit has to go to Bob Hall, the president of Publishers-Hall," said Saunders. "He came to Toledo in June, 1968, to talk with my father, Allen Saunders. He's sort of the dean of comic writers. Bob Hall told him he wanted to do a strip with a black character and my father said, 'Well, that's fine, but I haven't got time. I'm already writing three strips. But you could go talk to my son!'" Hall did, and John Saunders accepted, reluctantly. He was not sure he could sensitively develop a black character.

Saunders met with Art Egerton, a black TV reporter, and talked about the strip. What finally emerged in November, 1968, was the story of a biracial team of news reporters who go all over the world in search of stories. The strip appears to be an unabashed attempt to capitalize on the success of the TV show *I Spy*. Its black character, Danny Raven, bears a striking resemblance to Bill Cosby. After an initial segment overseas, "to get

the readers used to seeing an integrated situation," the two heroes came back to an American city, complete with ghetto, black militants, unemployment, white gangsters, pro football heroes, pretty girls and a multi-millionaire black businessman who made his fortune selling spareribs.

Dateline: Danger is now carried in 130 newspapers, even appearing in Capetown, South Africa. Several newspapers in the South carry the strip. "The strip is an easy sell," said Sexton, but a hard cancel, unless editors want to open themselves to the charge of racism. Two other syndicates are reportedly trying to catch up with integrated strips of their own.

Meanwhile, *Mandrake the Magician* and *The Phantom*, both syndicated by King Features, are being "changed in keeping with the times," says Byck. In *Mandrake*, this means that the hypnotist's longtime sidekick, Lothar, no longer runs around half-naked, speaking in monosyllables. "Now he looks a little like Harry Belafonte, if Belafonte had more muscle," according to Byck. Lothar has

Wee Pals



Dateline: Danger



Butter and Boop



also been granted equal prominence in the strip and no longer serves only as a muscular foil to Mandrake's "hypnotic gesturing."

The major change in *The Phantom* is the integration of the Jungle Patrol. This police force used to be the all-white fount of justice in a black African nation. Now the chief is black, and the patrolmen seem equally distributed between the races. However, there are still anomalies like the black African native girl, whose hair is as long and straight as that of Diana Palmer, girlfriend of the "Ghost Who Walks."

Only one widely syndicated strip regularly breaches the "integration-in-adventure-only" rule: *Wee Pals*, drawn by Morrie Turner. Based loosely on the vastly popular *Peanuts*, it has a multi-racial cast, including a Negro, a Chicano, an Italian, and a Jew. The humor is gentle but frequently touches on race relations. "I try to play the cultures against one another, but without bitterness," said Turner. "If there's a philosophy, it is that we can all get along together." The strip, introduced four years ago by the Register and Tribune Syndicate, appears in a number of Midwestern newspapers, but still does not run anywhere south of Louisville.

Turner is distressed because "one of the strange things that's happened since I started is that they [the syndicates and newspapers] have placed the integrated strips in competition with each other," rather than with other strips in their own broad class. Thus, *Wee Pals* doesn't compete with *Peanuts*. "I guess it's because each editor feels 'We've got our token strip and we don't need any others,'" he said.

"It's the syndicates who really control this kind of thing," says

Marge D. Devine, who has been scribe of the National Cartoonists Society for twenty-six years. "The willingness of the cartoonist to do it was one thing, but the willingness of syndicates to accept it was another."

Black characters have appeared in a number of strips without severe reaction. Charles Schulz has introduced a black character "Franklin"; Milton Caniff's *Steve Canyon* has had one or two black faces; there was a black FBI agent in *Buz Sawyer* by Roy Crane; and the irrepressible Al Capp has included black entertainers in *Li'l Abner*. In one of the most celebrated comic stories in recent years, Mary Worth was peripherally involved in the romance of a Mexican-American stewardess and a Kennedy-like U. S. senator with presidential ambitions. The story was controversial for two reasons: Senator Edward Kennedy's celebrated automobile accident coincided with a similar accident in the strip, and it was perhaps the first attempt to portray a member of the Chicano community in human terms. As such, it represented a daring step on the part of the strip's author, Allen Saunders.

Whether these small steps toward integration of the comics will lead to more action is questionable. Said Turner: "I thought after Schulz did it everybody would." But at a seminar on integration of the comics held last year by the Newspaper Comics Council in New York, Allen Saunders got only "blank stares and quiet clearing of throats" when he suggested that the industry was "kidding themselves if they will not print integrated comics, because you can't walk down the street of any city in this country today and see only white faces. They said 'By golly, you're right,' but I don't know if

they're going to do anything about it."

Part of the answer may be provided by the fate of *Butter and Boop*, an all-black strip created by Black Light, Inc., in Kansas City, Mo. The firm is supported by the Faultless Starch Corp., of Kansas City, whose president, Gordon Behan III, thought that the lack of black figures in comics might have a detrimental effect on the psychological development of children. Behan donated money to a group of Midwestern and Southern black youths and gave them a mission: create a black comic strip. After some personnel difficulties, the strip has now become a moderately well drawn and reasonably amusing view of the lives of black ghetto children. Much of the action takes place in tenement alleys.

"We wanted to hit pretty close to the ghetto," explained artist Edward Carr. "We felt that by getting into the alleys and other places where ghetto kids live and play that we could get some real feeling into the cartoons."

Butter and Boop could be a watershed. It is the first trip that deals with the lives of ghetto children, the first that attempts to get at the black humor revolving around scraggly dogs, hustlers, unemployment, poor schooling, and unequal opportunity. The strip now is carried in only five newspapers, including the black Chicago *Defender*, but if it can be syndicated and circulated, it might spell the beginning of the end of a story that seems to be grinding along as interminably as some of the episodes in *Winnie Winkle*.

JACK E. WHITE

Mr. White is on the staff of the Race Relations Information Center.

Books

THE IDEAS OF HENRY LUCE. Edited with an Introduction by John K. Jessup. Atheneum. \$12.50.

□ As an attempt to explore the mind of Henry Luce, this book is at once exasperating and brilliantly successful. It is exasperating because the Tycoon himself could be so, whether unburdening himself of a sermon in the form of an editorial memo on the beauties of the European countryside, reaching awkwardly for a platform laugh, or taking himself altogether too earnestly as social philosopher, shaper of American destiny, and world seer. It is successful thanks largely to John K. Jessup's patient editing and his luminous introductory essay, and also because, whether one liked Luce or not, his many-sided mind—questing, pragmatic, insatiable—compels grudging respect. If the style is flat and graceless, it is always clear, and the substance nearly always rewarding.

Jessup divides his material into topics—Journalism, Politics and Patriotism, The Rule of Law, The Businessman and His System, Art and Architecture—and gives us selections from Luce's speeches and writings in chronology within each. Samples:

Meditating that the world seems no better off for all the information Time, Inc., has supplied it, Luce suggests that "just as the answer to the failure and befuddlements of democracy is more democracy," so it is, perhaps, with journalism: give us more, and make it better. "There are more things in heaven and earth, O Journalist, than are included in your philosophy—or in your craftsmanship."

Sifting through the Hutchins Commission's report, largely underwritten by his firm, he chides it for, in essence, displaying a philosophical ambiguity about God.

The Tycoon convinces John Foster Dulles in 1958 that "the rule of law" should be "a basic cardinal element of American foreign policy." ("I could sense that a million brain cells were beginning to click in Dulles' powerful mind.") Alas for the rule of law, Dulles shortly contracted his fatal illness.

In a selection from a book unpublished at his death, Harry gives his estimate of John F. Kennedy: "Style! That is the word." The exposition that follows applies the theme to JFK's wardrobe, delivery, social demeanor, and relationship to the cosmos—a characteristic Lucean tour de force.

This is a fit companion to Robert Elson's *Time Inc.* It may be a while before we have a fair fix on Luce's place in the firmament—one presumes it is W. A. Swanberg's turn next—but in the interim, the Tycoon speaks for himself.

LOUIS M. STARR

THE OPPOSITION PRESS OF THE FEDERALIST PERIOD. By Donald H. Stewart. State University of New York Press. \$18.

□ This stately tome of nearly a thousand pages—a third of them given over to scholarly apparatus—is not one to win wide notice. But the author visited some forty-five libraries and pored over the files of most of the 550 newspapers he estimates were published in 1787-1801, and he advances a convincing thesis that the anti-Federalist press—as the outraged John Adams styled it, "a group of foreign liars encouraged by a few ambitious native gentlemen"—engineered the epochal victory of Thomas Jefferson in 1800. The evidence marshalled from both "ins" and "outs" makes it unlikely that the role of the press in the formulation of our political system will ever be neglected by historians hereafter.

MASS COMMUNICATIONS AND AMERICAN EMPIRE. By Herbert I. Schiller. Augustus M. Kelley Publishers. \$9.

□ A University of Illinois professor who edits the *Quarterly Review of Economics and Business*, the author develops the provocative premise that broadcasting has become so wedded to "the mass production way of life" that it has been disconnected as an alarm "by those very elements it was designed to signal against"—including the military-industrial complex, to which it is fused through the electronics industry. Only a "democratic reconstruction" of mass communications by dynamic subgroups in our society, he concludes, can forestall evolution of a worldwide communications monolith dedicated to "consumerism."

Unfinished business

Chappaquiddick Comment

TO THE REVIEW:

Of the views you reproduce to show "the many shapes" of the crossroads on Chappaquiddick [Fall, 1969], one is a rather crude drawing, one is somewhat foreshortened, but all are accurate and, in fact, show no inconsistencies. The *Newsweek* air photograph is of the crossroads only, does not show the Dyke Bridge, and is taken from a direction justifying your observation that the intersection as seen is X-shaped. The photographer, by varying his position a little, could have made it Y-shaped.

It chanced that Jack Hubbard, a news photographer, was vacationing on Chappaquiddick at the time of the tragedy; his photographs were immediate, clear, and in every way admirable. They were widely published.

Newsweek had a staff man in Edgartown on another assignment. His stories, clear and competent, were larded by *Newsweek* with impressions of Senator Kennedy's recent reputation as to liquor and women; the result was only part reporting and the rest regurgitation, as is so often the case with the newsmagazines.

Some reporters did swim from Chappaquiddick Point to the Edgartown side of the harbor channel, but this was not necessary. On the night of the tragedy there was no current whatever; the ease with which the swim could have been made was, and is, perfectly obvious. Pet dogs swim the channel often.

The outstanding reporting, more thorough and accurate than any other, was that of Joseph Lelyveld of the *New York Times*, who worked part of the time with Jack Hubbard. The *Times* stories gave a clear-cut, precise account of the whole affair; and it was these reports alone which identified and described the two cars involved on Chappaquiddick that night. By so

doing they fixed exactly and beyond a doubt the limitations of the time available for Senator Kennedy to have done all that he said he had done when he made his television explanation. The establishing of these time limits, uncomfortable for the Senator and his friends, was a first-rate accomplishment.

It was not "pressure" from the press that "forced certain facts about Chappaquiddick into the open." It was simply asking questions and getting answers that brought out all the facts.

All this is not to say that the scene lacked the "rush for bulletins, exclusive 'angles,' shakily conceived speculation and gossip—in brief, the sins of superficiality, haste, and herd journalism" of which you write. There was a surfeit of all that. But there was also the expert, patient, thorough, and productive work of good newspapermen such as the *New York Times* reporter and several others.

HENRY BEETLE HOUGH
Editor
Vineyard Gazette
Edgartown, Mass.

TO THE REVIEW:

You stated that "to our knowledge, no media dispatched a swimmer to try to swim the channel. . . ." I enclose a page two Philadelphia *Bulletin* story from September 2 in which reporter Bayard Brunt, fifty-two, did precisely that.

You quote what purports to be our lead on an interview with Rosemary Keough. It was not our lead; the AP reached way down into our story to pull out its lead.

You quote Rosemary Keough with apparent approval as saying "the [*Bulletin's*] entire story was a fabrication." *Bulletin* reporter Rowland T. Moriarty maintains the story was correct, and we support him.

GEORGE R. PACKARD
Managing Editor
The Philadelphia Bulletin

EDITOR'S NOTE: We welcome Mr. Hough's observations, but point out

that most Americans do not enjoy the advantage of knowing Chappaquiddick as he does, and were dependent for understanding on such disparate photos and diagrams as those shown. We apologize to Mr. Packard on two counts: 1) failing to credit the *Bulletin's* enterprise in dispatching a swimmer, which (along with other such voyages mentioned by Mr. Hough) had not come to our attention at press time; and 2) compounding the error of our Washington source in attributing the AP lead to the *Bulletin*. Miss Keough, like other news sources, may be subject to sober second thoughts and wish someday to qualify her allegation of "fabrication," but our source stands by the accuracy of Miss Keough's quotation at the time.

The moonshot

TO THE REVIEW:

I read with interest Edwin Diamond's article on the coverage of Apollo 11 [Fall, 1969] and, in general, I agree with his basic criticism. Far too much of the news coverage, especially the TV variety, seemed to have been composed by the hard-working souls at NASA.

However, at least one organization, Science Service, tried to place the moon mission in perspective and provide detailed advance information which was the result of hard digging rather than a few trips to NASA's press office. The material came in a sixteen-page color supplement, *In the Beginning*. . . .

ROBERT COCHNAR
Executive Editor for Publications
Newspaper Enterprise Association, Inc.
New York City

TO THE REVIEW:

Edwin Diamond stated that the "full story of those final two minutes of the Eagle's descent was not put together until at least four days later—mostly by Richard Witkin of the *New York Times*." Rudy Abramson was first to get the story

and he had it in detail—in the Los Angeles *Times* two full days before Witkin's, quoting Lt. Gen. Samuel C. Phillips (a quote Mr. Diamond attributed to Witkin's diligence).

We thought we did offer "distinguished material." In all we provided fifteen special articles by our own reporters, ranging from "The Beginning of an Answer: Are We Really Alone?" by religion editor Dan Thrapp to "Apollo Paradox: Peace Symbol Rooted in War," by Rudy Abramson. We ran one or two a day beginning July 13.

FRANK P. HAVEN
Managing Editor
Los Angeles Times

TO THE REVIEW:

It was B. J. Richey, the Huntsville *Times'* Washington correspondent, who first broke the story of Eagle's fuel depletion. His story moved via Newhouse News Service on Tuesday night, July 22. His enthusiasm perhaps outstripped his competitive instinct when he tipped Rudy Abramson to the story.

Beyond that I will charitably assume that the Huntsville *Times* is among the "few exceptions." Mr. Diamond concedes provided adequate background and interpretive reports, drawing on sources developed during the nine years the moonshot was in preparation.

PATRICK McCaULEY
Executive Editor
The Huntsville Times
Huntsville, Ala.

TO THE REVIEW:

Mr. Diamond wrote: "Even in Houston, home base of Mission Control and the astronauts, the *Chronicle* and *Post* had to flesh out their largely routine coverage with copy from the New York *Times* and the Washington *Post*-Los Angeles *Times* Service." The Houston *Post* has not been a user of the New York *Times* service for years. It has never been a user of the Los Angeles *Times* Service.

EDWIN D. HUNTER
Managing Editor
The Houston Post

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Diamond comments, "Mr. Haven and Mr. McCauley should recall that I said the 'full story of those final two minutes,' that 'Witkin doesn't claim an exclusive,' and that I mentioned that others worked on this aspect, including Abramson. In Houston, while both papers subscribe to several news services, it was the *Chronicle* which made lavish use of news service copy, including the New York and Washington-Los Angeles services I mentioned."

The Shaw Case

TO THE REVIEW:

Roger Williams and Michael Parks now find that my real sin at the Clay Shaw trial was reporting a trial in which I was also a witness [UNFINISHED BUSINESS, Summer, 1969]. I did not report the Clay Shaw trial. I had no assignment to cover it, sought none, filed nothing for its duration. Indeed, as an upcoming witness I was excluded from the courtroom for the first thirty-three days of the thirty-six-day trial.

I told Williams in New Orleans that I was not reporting the trial. I added that after the verdict was in I intended to reconstruct the method by which Jim Garrison had manufactured his case against Shaw.

In my 1967 *Saturday Evening Post* article, I became the first reporter in the country to document the fraudulent nature of Garrison's case against Shaw. At Shaw's trial, I simply swore that what I had written in the *Post* was true. The jury that acquitted Shaw handed down the ultimate verdict on my competence as a reporter.

When the *Post* assigned me to the Garrison investigation, I was a friend of Garrison and a stranger to Shaw. I discounted my personal relationships and simply went where the facts took me.

JAMES PHELAN
Long Beach, Calif.

Minorities and Media

TO THE REVIEW:

Ford Foundation support has been crucial to several programs aimed at increasing the number of minority group members working in the news media [Fall, 1969]. I hope the Ford Foundation and other organizations will continue to fund these projects. But it will take more than money for training.

What we need most—and we do not have it now—is a genuine commitment from the media to hire those who are trained in special programs such as the Columbia summer program under Fred W. Friendly, or those with motivation and talent who are recruited through such programs as ours at the New York Urban Coalition.

Incidentally, my position at *Newsday* was not as stated, but was reporter and copy editor.

STUART DIM
Director
New York Urban Coalition
Communications
Skills Bank for Minorities

View from the Author

TO THE REVIEW:

Your review of my book, *All the News that Fits: A Critical Analysis of the News and Editorial Content of the New York Times*, is a thin mess of mistakes, contradictions, and biases.

Mine is not a "view from the Right" or the Left or the Middle. It is an effort to get at the truth. It should be the purpose of newspapers to give the people the truth so that they can make sound decisions involving their government and eventually their lives. When news is omitted, distorted, or fabricated, the problem that arises does not concern the Right or the Left, the radicals, liberals, or conservatives, primarily; but the truth, which has made men free and will keep them free.

HERMAN H. DINSMORE
New York City

REPORT ON REPORTS

Summaries and reviews
of current literature in journalism

"Newspapers' Death Held Exaggerated," *Forbes*, October 1, 1969.

In contradistinction to the usual woeful tidings, *Forbes'* lively and informative survey finds "the industry today is healthier than ever before," and offers estimates of revenue and assets to prove it.

"The Printed Word Goes Electronic," by Lawrence Lessing, *Fortune*, September, 1969.

A concise review of now-primitive all-electronic technology which will render obsolete today's fastest presses and "presages a revolution on a scale with that of Gutenberg's invention of movable type."

"The Los Angeles Times," by John Corry, *Harper's*, December, 1969.

A former New York *Times* reporter recounts the profitable results of allowing reporters to "do things that they would not do at any other paper"—a "freedom that may be the *Times'* best contribution to American newspapers."

"Media Monopoly: The Chronicle Publishing Co. Seemed Fairly Good at This Game Until It Broke a Few Rules," by Stephen R. Barnett, *San Francisco*, October, 1969.

An acting professor of law at the University of California at Berkeley looks askance at the power of a prominent multiple-media ownership and the uses to which it has been put, including allegedly trying to squelch critics by dispatching private detectives on their trail.

"The Chicago Tribune, Our Media Monster," by Fred Eychaner, *Chicagoland*, November, 1969.

An enterprising city magazine reports on legal and financial complexities involved in a citizen committee's apparently successful campaign to keep the internationally famous cultural FM station WFMT from being absorbed by the giant *Tribune* media complex.

"Getting the Old Lady Off Her Duff," by Bernard McCormick, *Philadelphia*, October, 1969.

The burgeoning editorial renaissance of the *Philadelphia Bulletin* is insouciantly examined by a leading gadfly among Philadelphia media.

"The Death of the Post," by Michael M. Mooney, *The Atlantic*, November, 1969; "We Call on the Saturday Evening Post—For the Last Time," by Don A. Schanche, *Esquire*, November, 1969; "I Am Marty Ackerman. I Am Thirty-Six Years Old and I Am Very Rich. I Hope to Make the Curtis Publishing Company Rich Again," by Otto Friedrich, *Harper's*, December, 1969.

Three former *Post* editorial executives recall the great magazine's last days, the latter in an excerpt from a forthcoming book.

"Negro Journalism in America Before Emancipation," by Carter R. Bryan, *Journalism Monographs*, No. 12, September, 1969.

A University of Maryland journalism professor, in a well written overview, corrects a number of errors in existing histories and provides a valuable checklist of early Negro newspapers.

"Case for Advocacy Journalism," by David Deitch, *The Nation*, November 17, 1969.

A Boston *Globe* staff writer questions "the myth of objectivity" and argues that credibility problems stem in part from the view that overt neutrality is "establishment-oriented" manipulation of the news.

"Journalism: The Way It Is, as Seen by Black Reporters and Students," by Melvin Mencher, *Journalism Quarterly*, Autumn, 1969.

A Columbia journalism professor who made a fact-finding tour of sixteen campuses in twelve cities illuminates reasons for journalism's lack of attraction to many young blacks.

"The National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting: What Is It?" by Robert L. Coe, *Television Quarterly*, Summer, 1969.

A former ABC-TV vice president, now an Ohio State University faculty member, paints an unflattering portrait of Thomas Hoving and other Citizens Committee members—whose approach he finds "far from encouraging."

DANIEL J. LEAB

the lower case



JOY IN THE FAMILY: Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania and his wife embrace after his election as Senate minority leader.

Politics makes . . .

. . . strange bedfellows indeed in this erroneous caption (New York Times, September 25).

first . . . management approved in 1963 and the winning of the world's top accolade, the Leventritt Award in 1964.

For the other two compositions to be presented Wednesday evening, Seattle Symphony Conductor Milton Ratims has selected Bach-Schonberg's Prelude in E-flat Major and Beethoven's "Erotica" Symphony No. 3 in E-Flat Major, Op. 55, the com-the next tribute to Napoleon

Scored for pornograph

The Tacoma News Tribune (November 16) discovers a new Beethoven work of unusual contemporary appeal.

**GALLUP
POLL**

Ted's political appeal high

**GALLUP
POLL**

Public esteem for Ted drops

Quick reverse department

Never before has political appeal fallen so fast (Chicago Sun-Times, successive editions August 3; above) or have merchants so quickly reversed decisions (New York Times, main and jump heads, October 8).

More Stores Moving to Sunday Openings

More Retailers Are Planning to Close on Sundays

Allen's Goal: End Illiteracy in U.S.

Minneapolis Star introduces Taste

Better late than . . .

The New York Post (September 23; top) illustrates the magnitude of U.S. Education Commissioner Allen's mission, and Publisher's Auxiliary (November 15) appears to credit the Star for more than merely a new food section.

Gambling Hall Bars Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (UPI)—Kenya's first gambling casino plans to bar "undesirable characters, prostitutes and journalists," the management said. No explanation was given for the barring of journalists.

Agnew's complaint?

Within a month of Spiro Agnew's first media speech this UPI dispatch arrived at the New York Times (December 7).

Middle Line Is Taken in The Home

Washington (AP)—A resolution lauding the bravery and dedication of U. S. servicemen in Vietnam was introduced in the House today as critics of American involvement near

A House is not . . .

The "homey" touch to governmental reporting is provided by the Kansas City Star (November 6).

proved to be a tall, balding man with a warm, toothy smile and black-rimmed glasses. Speaking with a distinct accent and looking younger than his 68 years, René Jules Dubos was born in Saint Brice, France, on February 20, 1901. This durable veteran of the test tube and the microscope took time out of his crowded schedule recently to provide the following information:

Precocious infant

The earliest known case of speech development—at birth—is recorded by Today's Health (September).

Study Dims Prospect of Life on Mars

Powerful study

Apparent paper "death ray" is recorded by the Washington Post (September 12).

Second reading

"Criticism is the spur to reform; and . . . a healthy society must reform"

■ The history of civilization is in considerable measure the displacement of error which once held sway as official truth by beliefs which in turn have yielded to other truths. Therefore, the liberty of man to search for truth ought not be fettered, no matter what orthodoxies he may challenge. Liberty of thought soon shrivels without freedom of expression. Nor can truth be pursued in an atmosphere hostile to the endeavor or under dangers which are hazarded only by heroes. . . .

The mark of a truly civilized man is confidence in the strength and security derived from the inquiring mind. We may be grateful for such honest comforts as it supports, but we must be unafraid of its incertitudes. Without open minds there can be no open society. And if society be not open the spirit of man is mutilated and becomes enslaved.

On the other hand is the interest in free speech. The right to exert all governmental powers in aid of maintaining our institutions and resisting their physical overthrow does not include intolerance of opinions and speech that cannot do harm, although opposed and perhaps alien to dominant, traditional opinion. The treatment of its minorities, especially their legal position, is among the most searching tests of the level of civilization attained by a society. It is better for those who have almost unlimited power of government in their hands to err on the side of freedom. We have enjoyed so much freedom for so long that we are perhaps in danger of forgetting how much blood it cost to establish the Bill of Rights. . . .

Criticism is the spur to reform; and Burke's admonition that a healthy society must reform in order to conserve has not lost its force. . . . It is a commonplace that there may be a grain of truth in the most uncouth doctrine, however false and repellent the balance may be. . . . In the last analysis it is on the validity of this faith that our national security is staked.

—Justice Felix Frankfurter
Dennis v. United States (1951).

